



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

Merchants Strive To Weather Bad Economy

High Costs, Cautious Customers Make for Some Rough Times

By Joshua Brandt

The nation's economic malaise has hit Noe Valley merchants hard. And although residents of the neighborhood tend to be more affluent, and conscious of the benefits of shopping locally, few businesses have remained unscathed.

Perhaps no group of merchants has been impacted more than those selling or serving food.

Asked how the current recession—or, more accurately, stagflation—has affected his business, Bruce Ponte, proprietor of Café Ponte at the corner of 24th and Diamond streets, gave a pithy response.

"Sometimes a blueberry muffin isn't just a blueberry muffin," he said with a wry smile. "The price of a fifty-pound bag of flour has nearly doubled in the past four months," Ponte said, adding that the cost of a 200-count carton of eggs had almost tripled over the last two years, going from \$12 to \$30. In addition, he has been paying fuel surcharges for food deliveries to the cafe. Then there is the impact from the sharp decline across the United States in the bee population,



Video Wave co-owner and Noe Valley Merchants Association co-president Gwen Sanderson, shown with employee Vicente de Jesus de la Vega, is hoping neighborhood residents will continue to shop (and rent) locally during the current shaky economy. Photo by Pamela Gerard

which pollinates the flowers that make the blueberries.

Clearly, the price of producing muffins has risen in the past few years. The cost of muffins, however, has not.

"People have an idea of how much they want to pay for a muffin, and you really can't go above that price," said Ponte.

A Perfect Storm

Ponte's dilemma epitomizes the struggles faced by other local restaurants and food vendors.

"Our distributors used to raise their costs every several months, and now they raise their costs almost weekly," said Joshua Epple, the owner of Drewes Bros. Meats on Church Street. "Just when you think the prices are set, *wham!* you're hit with another increase."

While noting that his store has been a neighborhood institution for well over a century, which has helped it endure tough economic times, Epple said this one is

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Riders Tell Muni Planners: Spare The 35-Eureka

And Think Twice Before You Reroute the 24-Divisadero

By Lorraine Sanders

When Diamond Street resident David Bernstein heard about the possible elimination of the 35-Eureka Muni bus line, which connects Noe Valley and Diamond Heights to the Castro and Cole Valley, he did something very uncharacteristic: he went to his computer, typed up a petition, and began going door-to-door along his street asking for signatures.

Bernstein, who describes himself as an "accidental activist" who's not "all that out-going," had neither created nor circulated a petition before. But the thought of losing the bus line, which he rides occasionally and his partner uses daily on his route to work, sent him into action.

"The topography here makes the alternatives challenging for healthy, fit people and impossible for those who are not," he said.

As it turned out, he wasn't the only one concerned.

In just two days, he had collected 80 signatures, many of them from elderly

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Rwandan Genocide Survivor to Speak at St. Paul's

Immaculée Ilibagiza Brings Message of Forgiveness

By Lorraine Sanders

In early April 1994, 22-year-old student Immaculée Ilibagiza headed home from university for Easter break. She was somewhat reluctant to leave her studies, but went ahead at her father's urging. It was important that she be there for the holiday.

Within days of returning home for what was supposed to be a celebration,

Ilibagiza found herself confined to a three-by-four-foot bathroom with seven other women, while her entire family—save one brother who was studying abroad at the time—and an estimated 800,000 people died during the 100 days that the Rwandan genocide raged outside.

For a total of 91 days, Ilibagiza remained in the tiny bathroom, a rare second such facility in the home of a local Hutu pastor. By pushing a wardrobe in front of the door, the pastor had harbored the eight Tutsi women, even as frenzied killers searched the home and called for

them by name. No one spoke. During her silent waking hours, Ilibagiza, raised in a well-to-do Catholic Tutsi family, prayed using a red and white rosary from her father and studied her only reading material: a Bible and an English dictionary.

This is only part of the story Ilibagiza will tell when she visits St. Paul's Church in Noe Valley on June 12, for the first in a series of events celebrating the Catholic Church's Year of Saint Paul, which begins June 2008 and commemorates the 2,000th anniversary of the saint's birth. Churches around the world are taking part



Immaculée Ilibagiza comes to St. Paul's June 12.

in the yearlong event, announced by Pope Benedict XVI last year.

"It's just a real message of hope and

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Here Comes The Wedding Photographer

Claire Lewis Unveils Favorite Marital Moments in *Exposed*

By Olivia Boler

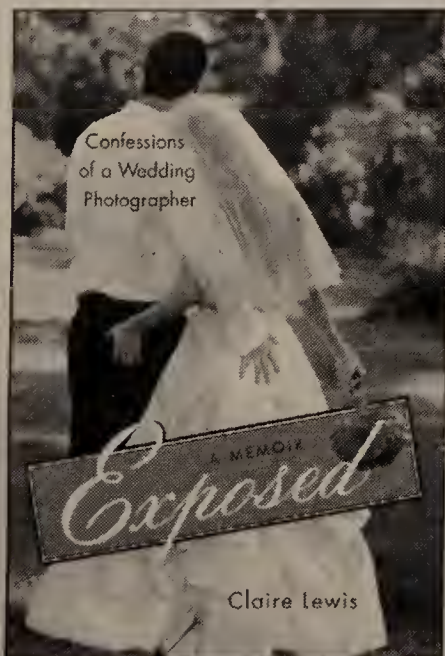
Claire Lewis has a recurring nightmare. She shows up to a wedding naked and with no film for her camera. This is a pretty scary dream, since Claire Lewis is a wedding photographer. It can't be a coincidence then that her new memoir, published in late May by Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press, is titled *Exposed: Confessions of a Wedding Photographer*.

Showing up naked to a gig hasn't hap-

pened yet, but Lewis, 46, has experienced a true wedding-photographer fiasco.

"I shot two weddings in one weekend, something I rarely do," she explains. "I always have two cameras, but it turns out the shutter on one of them wasn't opening. Half the photos I took—there was nothing. The wedding party had family that had come from all over the world, and there were no pictures of them. One of the bride's mothers called me and cried and cried. It was really horrible. I've been at this a long time. I check and double-check equipment, but there are parts you can't control, and things go wrong. It doesn't help those nightmares."

Nightmares or not, Lewis has lots of stories to tell—many of weddings that went smoothly, but many others of photo shoots (and attempted unions) that



Claire Lewis will read and sign her new book at Cover to Cover on Sunday, June 8, at 4 p.m.

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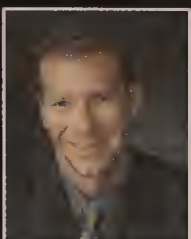
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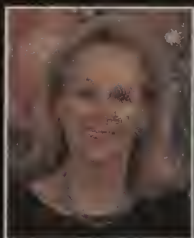
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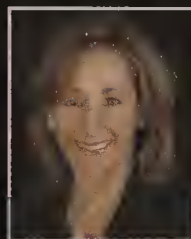
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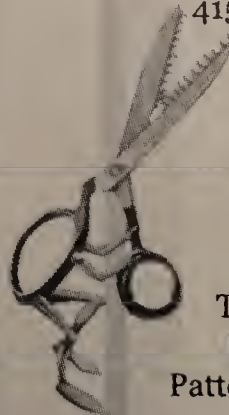
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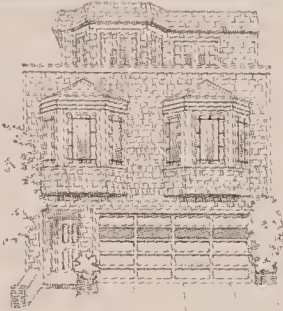


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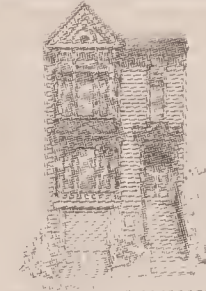
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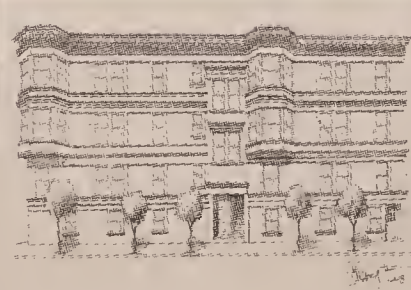
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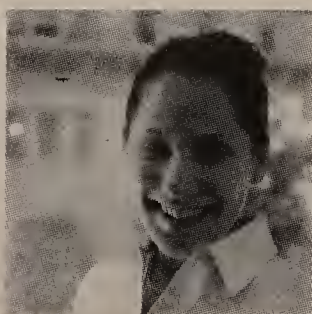
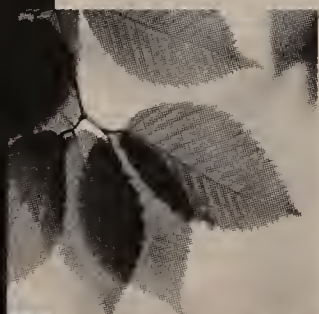
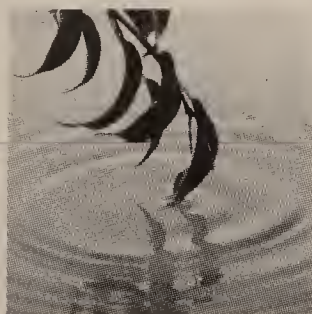
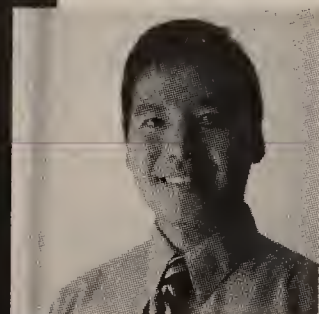
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Two Hands (Three Hearts) Full. Dad Peter Larsen's days are fullest when he can hug his daughters Ella, age 10, at right, and 8-year old Clare. Happy Father's Day to everyone in Noe Valley!
Photo by Pamela Gerard

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'Free Wi-Fi' May Cost a Bundle

Editor:

Thanks for alerting your readers that we're now part of a vast uncontrolled experiment, courtesy of Meraki's "frec" wi-fi access ("Tech Firm Brings Free Wireless to Noe Homes," May 2008 *Voice*). A resident quoted in the article may think it's fantastic, but I think it's an outrage. I resent being a lab rat, and so will anyone familiar with the science on radio-frequency radiation.

Wireless devices such as cell phones, personal data assistants (PDAs), laptops, baby monitors, cellular and broadcast towers, and wi-fi and Wi-MAX networks all emit radio-frequency radiation, a type of electromagnetic field (EMF) associated with serious and even life-threatening health effects.

A new analysis of more than 2,000 research studies links EMF exposure with neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and Lou Gehrig's, as well as cancer in adults and children. Written by internationally respected scientists, this independent analysis—*The BioInitiative Report*, see www.bioinitiative.org—concludes that safety standards in almost every country are inadequate to protect public health. This report drew widespread media attention in Europe and Asia and an endorsement by the European Environmental Agency (<http://www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/radiation-risk-from-everyday-devices-assessed>), but it has not been mentioned in the U.S. media.

The German government has warned its citizens about potential health risks of wi-fi. The link to the story from the UK's *Independent* is <http://environment.independent.co.uk/lifestyle/article2944417.ece>. San Francisco narrowly escaped becoming a wi-fi city when Earthlink pulled the plug on a collaboration with Google.

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Local media have been no help in educating the public about the science on health effects of radio-frequency EMF.

It's not surprising that EMF exposure could have health effects. We are bioelectrical beings—our hearts and brains are bioelectrical systems—the systems basic to life itself. You can choose not to use a cell phone—although few of us do—but if Meraki blankets Noe Valley with wi-fi by July, all of us will be exposed 24/7 to radio-frequency radiation.

Meraki is making wi-fi available "free" to its Noe Valley lab rats. This approach lets Meraki avoid liability for future health effects of the free wi-fi. It's time for us to say: Better safe than sorry. There is more than enough evidence to take a precautionary approach to these technologies. Failure to use a precautionary approach could be costly. Think about tobacco, lead, asbestos—corporations touted the benefits and concealed the scientific evidence of harm. Marketing got ahead of science. Consider what the cost would be to the health of Noe Valley residents, especially the long-term health of the many babies and young children who live in this neighborhood.

Many consumers are concerned but largely uninformed about possible risks from increasing EMF exposure levels from multiple sources. Consumers need to know the whole story before exposing themselves or their children to a potential carcinogen or neurotoxicant. We know there's no free lunch, but in the meantime, we deserve a closer look at the price tag.

Nancy Evans
Cesar Chavez Street

Spats Over Dogs at Noe Courts

Editor:

Showdowns have been escalating between the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department and the dog owners who use Noe Courts park at 24th and Douglass streets.

Every day for the past month [mid-April through mid-May], a Rec and Park ranger has been stationed outside Noe Courts for an hour or two (with engine running) to keep a vigilant eye out for off-

leash dogs. While the park is signed on-leash, the neighborhood has been letting their dogs run around for decades with few incidents. As you know, last year the city spent \$300,000 to improve the children's play area and put in a good fence. Ever since, Rec and Park has cracked down on us and a couple other parks.

In late April, several dog owners refused to put their dogs on leash, so the ranger called the SFPD. Unpleasantness ensued, with one of the dog owners being cited.

So not only is a ranger being paid for several hours a week to watch a mostly empty park, but police officers are being diverted to chastise peaceful dog owners. Surely there are more serious issues (drug users in Golden Gate Park, violence elsewhere) for park staff and police to be dealing with than a couple of dogs running happily in a small park.

Michael Fasman

Spare Those Pajamas

Editor:

Just read the amusing article, "First Food Ceremony," in the May edition. Please tell me Robin Dutton-Cookston didn't really toss "another" pair of pajamas in the trash because her kid "pooped" on them. Did she perhaps mean she tossed them in the laundry?

Leslie Wellbaum
Sanchez Street

Robin Dutton-Cookston replies: Oops, you're right, my writer's brain tossed them in the wrong hamper. Of course, the pajamas were washed, dried, and recycled.

THE NOE VALLEY VOICE
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The *Voice* welcomes your letters, photos, and stories, particularly on topics relating to Noe Valley. All items should include your name, address, and phone number, and may be edited for brevity or clarity. (Unsigned letters will not be considered for publication.) Unsolicited contributions will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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One Clean Beach. You dropped it, they bagged it. On Wednesday, May 14, middle school students from St. Philip School went to Ocean Beach for a post Earth Day cleanup. Kudos to the seventh and eighth-grade students and teacher Mr. Contreras, a St. Philip graduate. *Photo by Paula Whitehead*

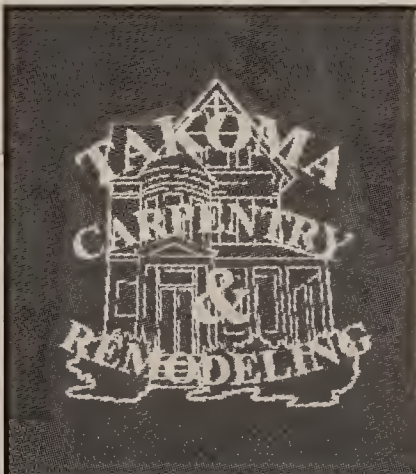
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Slow Economy Takes Its Toll on Local Merchants

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

different. "Some of it is media-driven, I think," Epple said. "But some of it is hard to deny. When our costs are going up by ten to thirty cents a pound on some items, it's hard to justify carrying them. People in the industry are taking a huge hit on Alaska king salmon. Our wholesalers ordered five hundred pounds recently, and were barely able to sell it with any margins."

With a plethora of economic, environmental, and political concerns swirling around them, many local business owners feel like they've encountered a "perfect storm."

"Sometimes I tell people I run a non-profit," said Paolo Dominici, who has owned Bacco Ristorante on Diamond Street for 15 years. "Local minimum-wage laws play a part, but the dollar is being killed by the euro right now. We import all of our olive oil, and we really are debating serving complimentary bread and oil at the table."

"If it weren't for all of our local customers who value small businesses so much, we would be in trouble. As is, with large parties that have a certain budget [and ask for a discount], we're sometimes forced to turn them away. In the past, we'd find a way to make it work...no problem. But not now."

Smaller Seasonal Menus

Dominici's concerns are echoed by Deano Lovecchio, the chef at Koozek Café on 24th near Castro.

"I call it the trickle-down effect," Lovecchio said. "Because menu items cost more, people eat out less. So restaurants order less food. So the produce and delivery companies let go of employees. So guess what? Those employees eat out less."

"That's what's happening locally. Now magnify that a hundred times, and that's what's happening nationally. So you can see where we're in big trouble."

But Lovecchio, who commented on the skyrocketing price of rice by saying "rice is going to be the culinary equivalent of the gas crisis of the seventies," sees a little room for optimism.

"We've saved money by switching from linen to paper napkins, which are recyclable and better for the environment," he said. "That saved us about \$400 per month. And we've had to change our menu to accommodate the times. Even though it was a popular item, we had to eliminate the rib-eye steak. Either we charged the same amount for half the steak, or twice as much for the same cut. It was a catch-22 that would leave our customers unhappy no matter what."

Lovecchio solved his conundrum by cooking more comfort food, such as macaroni and cheese, which has long been a kids' favorite at the restaurant but is now made for adults as well. "It's reasonably

priced, and it's filling, and that's what people are looking for nowadays," Lovecchio said.

The chef is convinced that restaurants' salvation lies in seasonal produce.

"Seasonal produce is always cheaper, and because it's fresh it has more vitamins and nutrients. So you're not only helping people's wallets but their waistlines as well. More restaurants will be switching to smaller, seasonal menus. That's a better option than cutting back on staff, which we don't want to do."

Worst in 30 Years

That option, unfortunately, wasn't available for Denny Giovannoli, the owner of Tuggey's Hardware store. An icon of 24th Street for over a century, the store has felt the housing bust viscerally.

"We've had to let people go, and they were all good guys," said Giovannoli. "I hope we don't have to let any more people go, but it's hard to tell where things are going. This is by far the worst I've seen in my thirty years here."

"After a certain point, it really doesn't matter what you do to promote sales. We've had a loyal clientele for decades, but people are coming in less frequently, and buying less stuff when they do come in," added Giovannoli, whose father worked for Mr. Tuggey himself. "The bottom line is that we're living in a really weird time right now."

"It's not just Noe Valley that's ugly...the whole world is ugly," concurred Robert Ramsey, co-owner of Just for Fun gift store on 24th near Noe. "But that's tough to think about when you've had to cut back on staff, which we've had to do."

"In my 20 years here at this store, there's never been a time like this. There's just no comparison. None. Usually, if there's a slump, it will affect certain types of products. But we're down across the board in every department. Believe me I think about it daily," said Ramsey, pausing for emphasis. "And I mean *daily*."

'Spend Locally' the Mantra

Other merchants in the area take a more sanguine approach, or, conversely, believe that their business might be getting a little boost from the slump.

"We've been in the batten-down-the-hatches mode for years, so this is nothing new," said Tracy Wynne, co-owner of Cover to Cover Booksellers on Castro Street. "The independent book business has been under assault for years," Wynne added.

In fact, according to Wynne, whose business was bolstered by a loan from a consortium of local residents in 2003, this economic cycle wasn't as bad as the dot-com boom and bust.

"Back then, when the Internet was more of a novelty, more people were enthralled with ordering books online. Now people have become much more aware of how important it is to spend money locally."

"I think that having a business in Noe Valley is a huge asset," agreed Gwen Sanderson, this year's co-president of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association. Many local residents go out of their way to support neighborhood



Pillars of the Community: At a May 14 event held by the Noe Valley Merchants Association at Cooks Boulevard on Castro Street, Supervisor Bevan Dufty (far right) presented certificates of appreciation from the City of San Francisco to (left to right) Robert Roddick, of Noe Valley Law Offices; Isa Muhawieh, creator and founder of Isa's Salon; Noe Valley Beat Officer Lorraine Lombardo of the SFPD; and Joel Panzer of Real Management Company (RMC). Elisa Ining, owner of Elisa's Health Spa, was also recognized, but was out of town for the event. Each of the businesses honored had chalked up more than 25 years in the neighborhood.

Photo by Solly Smith

businesses, she said. "There's something unique about knowing the person that's serving you day in and day out," said Sanderson, who owns and operates Video Wave on Castro Street.

She feels her video business, which has been around for 20 years, also might be one of those that is less affected by economic downturns.

"In tough times, when people are looking to cut back, they'll be looking for more comfort items, and videos and DVDs certainly fall into that category. For example, if people want to cut back on a really high cable bill, they'll rent movies with us instead," added Sanderson.

Still, she and association co-president Donna Davis, of Forbeadin' on Church Street, have been busy shoring up their fellow shopkeepers by holding mixers and sidewalk sales and lobbying the city to protect small business.

Bucking the Trend

One merchant who said that he'd been receiving a tangible benefit from these turbulent times is Larry Kline, who's owned Noe Valley Cyclery since 1976.

"Well, gas prices are through the roof right now, so people are looking for an alternative means of transportation, and biking is a good one," said Kline. "That's especially true for people who are commuting to work, either within the city or taking a bike on Caltrain. I know that our sales of both folding bikes and electric bikes are higher than it's ever been."

"On the other hand," Kline added, "in tough economic times, people may decide to repair their old bike rather than

buy a new one, so that helps the store as well."

The economy was the impetus for Lynn Ingham, the owner of Lynn's Antiques and Beautiful Things, to form the Church Street Professionals.

"Even though our business is in Noe Valley, the merchants on Church Street live in the shadow of 24th Street. People don't realize that this part of Noe Valley has a huge diversity of shops. There are over a hundred businesses on Church between 24th Street and 30th Street that don't get the foot traffic of 24th Street."

If geography inspired Ingham to reach out to her neighbors, the weak economy gave her added incentive.

"In times like these, it really helps to know your neighbors," said Ingham, who added that the group's inaugural cocktail party at Incanto two summers ago was a huge success. "I think there's something really psychologically helpful in knowing that your business neighbor has your back. In the past year, I've met so many of my neighbors and I've been able to recommend their businesses. And I know they've done the same for me."

If Ingham's group and others like it are the harbingers of the future, it might provide a silver lining in these gloomy economic times.

"I'm hunkering down, as they say," commented Just for Fun's Ramsey, as his dog Roscoe jumped on his lap.

"I'm not really depressed, but...well, what am I? I guess you could say that I'm just weathering the storm, and waiting for it to pass."

"Happy days will come again." ■

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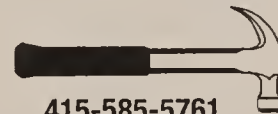
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Strong Reaction to Muni's Proposed Changes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and student riders. That may not sound like a large number, but it was enough to capture the attention of District 8 Supervisor Bevan Dufty.

"I am 100 percent clear that the changes don't make sense for the neighborhood, and they don't make sense for the riders of Muni," said Dufty, who added that he had received at least 120 calls to his direct phone line from residents concerned about proposed changes to the 35-Eureka line released earlier this year as part of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency's Transit Effectiveness Project (TEP).

The TEP, an initiative of both Muni and the city controller's office, marks the first comprehensive review of San Francisco's bus lines in 25 years. The goal is to study the entire system to find ways to improve performance, increase ridership, and, of course, cut costs. In its preliminary proposal, the TEP suggested changes to several Muni routes that run through Noe Valley. Among the recommendations are proposals to extend the J-Church to San Francisco State University, reroute the 24-Divisadero bus along 24th Street, and eliminate the 35-Eureka along Diamond, Addison, and Farnum streets.

As part of an ongoing series of community meetings to share its proposals and solicit feedback from residents, the TEP held a meeting on May 10 at the Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy.

"There was a lot of neighborhood opposition to the changes. I think [TEP

representatives] were a little surprised, but that's why they had the meeting," said Bernstein, who attended.

Steep Hills a Problem

In many ways, the planners' surprise is, well, not surprising. When compared with other bus lines in the city, the 35-Eureka has relatively low ridership. About 700 riders board the 35 each day, according to Muni data. Should the line be eliminated, Diamond Street residents would have to walk no more than four blocks to access another bus line. But what TEP researchers and consultants failed to take into account, it seems, were the hills.

When Bernstein looked at a map of the neighborhood on Google Earth, which includes satellite images, he was able to determine that eliminating the 35-Eureka would leave people on his block between 28th and Duncan streets two options. The first would be catching the 24-Divisadero at Castro and 26th streets (assuming its present route is retained), which would require a four-block walk with a 150-foot change in elevation. The second alternative would mean walking a shorter distance—just two blocks—to catch the 52-Excelsior at Diamond Heights Boulevard and Duncan streets, but it would require an uphill climb of at least 175 feet.

As Bernstein's petition notes, "The city police academy frequently trains recruits up that hill, and they don't have an easy time of it."

Instead of reducing service along the 35-Eureka line, Bernstein thinks the city should expand it.

"Lots of people here really depend on that line. If they were to extend the 35 over to the Glen Park BART, I think that would help [ridership].... It would make it easier for people to get to SFO and

down to jobs on the Peninsula," he suggested.

Trolley Wires on 24th Street?

Residents who attended the May 10 meeting were also concerned about proposed changes to the 24-Divisadero, which has an average of 10,700 people boarding a day.

"It would be a disaster to have the 24 go through our merchant district. It's already chaotic enough!" said Gwen Sanderson, co-president of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association and co-owner of Video Wave.

But Sanderson was even more exercised about the TEP's approach to Muni in general.

"My feedback on the card provided at the meeting was that they cannot look at how many people ride, for example, the 35 and then say, 'Well, there is not enough ridership.' They have to provide world-class transit, so that folks can rely on convenient transit and happily put away their cars.... As you move away from downtown, the transit options get more and more sparse. So why would someone in the avenues give up their car for infrequent transit options? They need to provide more options, not less," she said.

Concern brought her to the meeting, but Sanderson left feeling somewhat relieved. "They seemed very open to all the comments," she said.

For Debra Niemann, executive director of the Noe Valley Association, the prospect of running the 24-Divisadero along 24th Street was a less troubling matter than how the city might choose to implement the plan. Rerouting the bus line, according to TEP documents, would involve adding trolley wires along 24th Street.

"If you just come in and put in over-

head wires, it's going to look terrible. But how do you create a better street, how do you create a better pedestrian environment that also handles street traffic?" Niemann asked.

Niemann would prefer any changes along 24th Street to involve collaboration with the Better Streets San Francisco initiative, which is bringing many agencies together to work toward creating better pedestrian environments.

Whatever you think of the TEP's proposed changes, which are available for public viewing online, don't expect to see anything happen until at least July 2009.

The SFMTA's Judson True said his agency was asking residents to submit their comments online, in writing, or by telephone before June 15.

"After that, we'll start to work on revising draft proposals further. We expect to present revised recommendations to the SFMTA in late summer, and we will, of course, release those revised recommendations [to the public]," True told the *Voice* in late May. ■

For more information about the Transit Effectiveness Project's proposed changes to Muni lines, visit www.sftep.com or call the 311 Customer Service Center. Public comments may be submitted online, by phone using 311, by fax (415-701-4372), by e-mail to info@sftep.com, or by regular mail, to Julie Kirschbaum, TEP Project Manager, SFMTA, One South Van Ness Avenue, Seventh Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103.



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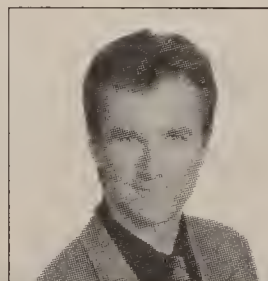
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Rwandan Genocide Survivor Comes to Noe Valley

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

forgiveness," says the Rev. Mario Farana, a native San Franciscan who came to St. Paul's Church in 1993.

Journey Toward Hope

And that is where the second, and perhaps most important, part of Ilibagiza's story begins. After emerging from the bathroom weighing a mere 65 pounds and making a treacherous escape through Hutu-occupied territory, she reached safety at a French compound, only to learn that her father, mother, and two brothers had been brutally murdered. Still, Ilibagiza refused to let hate, fear, and suffering take over.

Instead, she forgave her family's killers and embarked upon a remarkable journey that eventually led her to find a job with the United Nations, marry a fellow United Nations worker, and immigrate to the United States. She also authored two books, including the bestseller *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust*, and founded the Left to Tell Charitable Fund, benefiting orphaned survivors of the genocide. Today, Ilibagiza travels around the world telling her story, which is being adapted into a feature film with MPower Pictures.

"The symbolism of what she's doing is just like Saint Paul. She's going out into the world, and she's spoken not just to Catholic people, but to people of all faiths and religions," Farana explained. (Saint Paul, according to church history, was born in Tarsus, in what is now Turkey, about 10 A.D. He spent his life spreading

Jesus Christ's teachings, first to Jews and then to Gentiles.)

New Venture for Church

The parallels between Ilibagiza's life and the life of Saint Paul are not the only reason her visit to the church is a significant one. The cast and crew of *Sister Act* and a performance a few years back by musician Phil Coulter aside, the church has not made a habit of bringing in high-profile guests.

"This is the first time that we've had somebody of her stature," Farana said.

Nor has the church been comfortable spending money to make such appearances happen—especially not since seismic retrofitting, mandated after the Loma Prieta earthquake, totaled \$3.2 million. The renovation of St. Paul's 97-year-old Gothic landmark at Church and Valley streets was completed in 2006, but the debt still lingers. So explains the \$20 ticket price associated with the event. If they can fill St. Paul's, which seats about 1,000, event organizers say they'll come close to covering the costs associated with securing the internationally recognized speaker, who uses speaker fees to pay for travel expenses and to support her charitable fund's activities. The church is also working to raise private funds to cover expenses not met by ticket sales.

Inspired by Book and Bishop

Further contributing to the event's significance is the way in which the church came to invite Ilibagiza to visit in the first place. Last September, Farana stumbled upon Ilibagiza's book after a friend suggested he read it. Unbeknownst to Farana, Ilibagiza happened to be speaking that month at Oakland's Bishop O'Dowd High School. Purely by coincidence, retired Archbishop Frank Hurley of Alaska was visiting St. Paul's Church and, also

unbeknownst to Farana, was invited to hear Ilibagiza's talk in Oakland during his stay.

"When [Archbishop Hurley] returned to the rectory after the talk, he proceeded to tell Father Mario about this remarkable woman, and her presentation. Father Mario said it sounded like the exact same person he was reading about. He ran to his room to retrieve the book. Archbishop Hurley confirmed that yes, indeed, it was the very same person," recounts St. Paul's member and Sanchez Street resident Laure Moon, who was struck by the serendipity of the story when she began working with Farana to organize the event. That evening, Farana began hoping Ilibagiza would be willing to come to St. Paul's. Over the last eight months, the church has worked to turn this wish into a reality.

A Universal Message

On Thursday, June 12, Ilibagiza will be present for the church's inaugural event celebrating the Year of Saint Paul. The church is in the process of planning more commemorative events this year, but none may hold the wide appeal to non-

Catholics and those outside the church as Ilibagiza's visit. While Ilibagiza's story is undisputedly and deeply intertwined with her Catholic faith, hers is not a message confined by religious bounds.

As Moon put it, "Even if you don't have a specific religious background or faith that you follow, there are messages that transcend that, and those are messages of hope and forgiveness.... I think, in all of our lives, we have some areas where we want more hope, and there's always something that's hard to forgive."

"An Evening with Ilibagiza" will take place at 7 p.m. on June 12 at St. Paul's Church. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for seniors and students. Advance tickets can be purchased by sending a check made out to St. Paul's Church, to St. Paul's Church, Attn: Katy, 221 Valley Street, San Francisco, CA 94131. For more information, call 648-7538 or visit www.stpaulsf.org.

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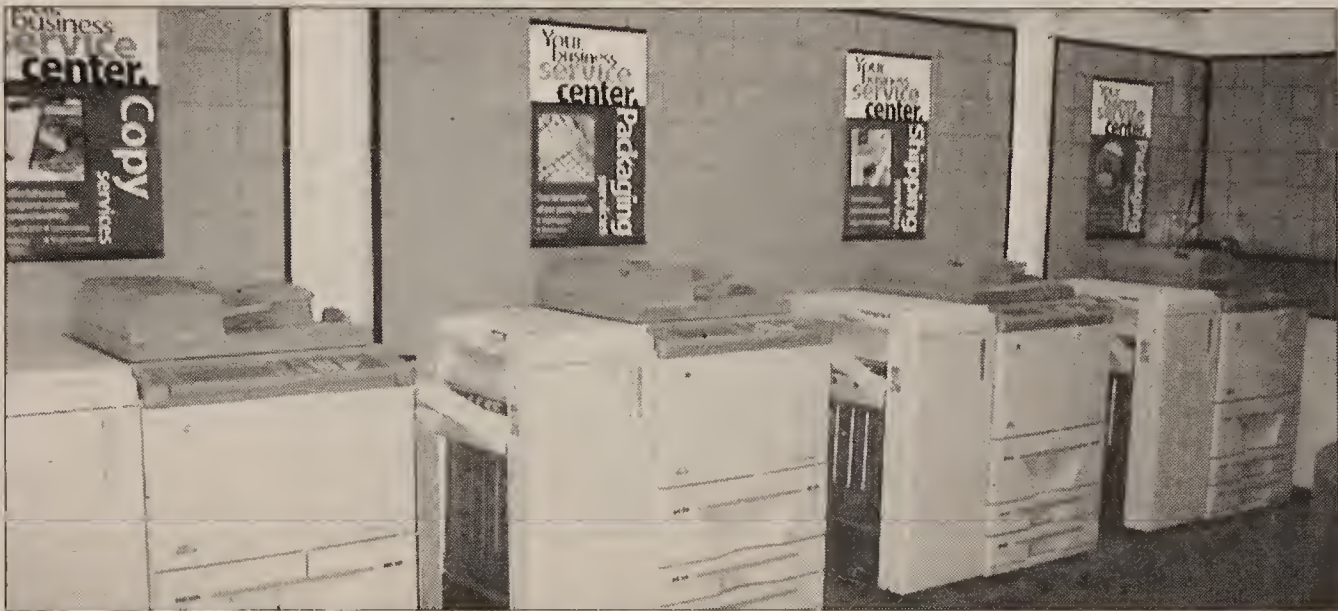
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Exposed: Claire Lewis' Close-Ups On Weddings

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

jumped the rails right out of the station. In *Exposed*, she reveals the funniest, most disturbing, and most poignant experiences she's had during two decades of photographing "hundreds and hundreds" of marriage ceremonies. Her book is likely to strike a chord with many local newlyweds, and it has already won the attention of media from around the country, including National Public Radio, which invited Lewis to be a guest on *Talk of the Nation* on May 29. (For an online podcast of the show, go to www.npr.org.)

Although Lewis has encountered her share of demanding clients, the Liberty Street resident avoids using the term "bridezilla." "I hate that word," she says. "Of course, I've had to deal with some horrible people, but weddings are very stressful, and brides are under tremendous financial and social pressure. They're trying to do everything right, and they've read these wedding guides where everything is perfect. There are some absolutely nice people who go a little crazy, especially if they are already perfectionists or easily stressed. Weddings will bring out an exaggerated version of yourself."

She describes the time an officiant threw up all over a bride during the ceremony. "That's pretty tough to deal with," Lewis says. In most weddings, the brides try to micromanage their bridesmaids. Some couples like to get their pets involved, typically as ring-bearers. One dog headed down the aisle during an outdoor ceremony and decided to pee on a chair leg (the guest sitting there got out of the way fast). There was another bride who decided, right after the ceremony, to consummate her union with her new husband—and his best man. "Does that make her a bridezilla?" Lewis asks with a laugh. "Maybe she just did not exhibit the most marvelous taste."

Lewis does talk about some brushes with hair-pulling craziness: brides who drink too much before the ceremony, to calm their nerves. Brides who e-mail the participants 10-page schedules divided into 10-minute increments. "Nothing goes like that," Lewis says. "Zippers will break. Schedules start to fall apart and brides get anxious. There are those who can go with the flow, who have great, funny, messy weddings. But sometimes it's just madness, and I come home thinking, Never again. Because shooting a wedding is hard every time. Clients always tell me, the pictures are the most important thing and this is a once-in-a-lifetime event."

Of course, Lewis has also worked for



Liberty Street resident Claire Lewis has shot hundreds of weddings in her 20 years as a photographer and journalist. The funniest, wildest, and most touching are chronicled in her memoir *Exposed*, published in May. Photo by Pamela Gerard

many relaxed, agreeable couples. She especially likes photographing weddings for Persian families. "The couples usually say to me, 'Don't worry—everyone will be late, and this is going to be a big, crazy mess.' Photographing the lovely people is wonderful, but in a way, I prefer the more challenging ones. The weddings that go sideways—that's part of the fun."

What she also loves is good, old-fashioned film. "I am officially a dinosaur," she laughs. Lewis does not even own a digital camera, although her husband John, an English teacher at Redwood High School in Marin, bought a little point-and-shoot to record his fishing feats.

She prefers the challenges that film sets up. "I have nothing against digital—for one thing, it's cheaper. But I like film because I think having some obstacles to push up against, like only 36 exposures, encourages creativity. I have to make certain decisions. Should the moment be in black and white or in color? I like to frame through a viewfinder because it adds to the magic and the ritual of shooting. When I change a roll of film, I have to think of the story I'm telling. With digital, you just blast away."

Lewis also doesn't do any retouching of her photos, and she certainly doesn't Photoshop them. She has stopped giving her clients the negatives, though. "I've had couples in their twenties who look at

the negatives, confused by what they are. It makes me feel old!" Instead, she scans the negatives onto a disk and gives that to the clients.

In addition to wedding photography, Lewis has shot commercial photography for publications like *Lonely Planet* travel guides, *Publishers Weekly*, *People* magazine, and Northwest Airlines' *World Traveler Magazine*. She also does portraiture and some documentary work. Since she had her daughter Tess 10 years ago, she travels less for work (she's been to Africa, Korea, Costa Rica, and Afghanistan, among other countries, and used to do non-profit work for organizations like Human Rights Watch).

Most of her wedding work takes place in San Francisco or in the wine country. While many of her clients are Noe Valley residents, she hasn't really shot a wedding in the neighborhood, except recently at Saint Philip's Church on Diamond Street. The reception was held elsewhere.

"This is a great neighborhood," Lewis says. "But the trouble with Noe Valley is that there aren't really any reception sites. And a lot of clients want to have a 'San Francisco' wedding for their out-of-town guests, so they go to places like the Flood Building or Bohemian Club or Greens Restaurant with its views."

Lewis grew up in England, Holland, and the United States, and speaks English

(with a charming, hard-to-place accent), Polish, French, and Dutch. In her teens, she attended Juilliard to study acting for a grueling two years before being asked to leave. It was probably a godsend, since she got into writing and photography instead. She has called Noe Valley home for over eight years, having moved here from New York City by way of a forest yurt (tent) in Sebastopol.

"A yurt! We knew we wanted to move to San Francisco, but we didn't know where," Lewis says. "A couple we met in Healdsburg told us we had to live in Noe Valley—Tess was a baby at the time. And I really wanted to be able to walk out the door of my home and find a coffee shop or browse a bookstore or sit in a playground and have a discussion with people that went beyond what's better, disposable or cloth diapers."

She's found all of this and more, she says. Lewis will be reading and signing books at Cover to Cover Booksellers, 1307 Castro Street, on Sunday, June 8, at 4 p.m. To find out more about *Exposed* or Lewis' wedding or other photography, go to www.clairelewis.com.



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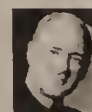
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(Trust Building Tip #92)
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HOW GREEN is my VALLEY

A Gift to the Street

By Hilary Gordon

Walk down the north side of 24th Street some Sunday morning, and as you stroll past number 3982, you will feel a change of atmosphere. Suddenly there are leaves rustling above your head and flowers spreading at your feet. For a moment the street noise is dimmer. Dappled sunlight teases the senses, while yellow wildflowers and purple agapanthus arch and sway.

And then it's over. You've walked past the shop Just for Fun, where a small sidewalk garden has replaced the concrete between the street trees planted last year. Sidewalk gardens can pack a lot of beauty into a few square feet. They are easy on the eyes because they green and soften our streets. But they also do their share for the environment.

Sidewalk Gardens Protect the Bay

How do these green islands help? Each winter when we have rainy weather, the stormwater floods into our sewers, bringing with it a year's worth of oil and dirt washed from our streets and sidewalks. In a heavy storm, rainwater can overwhelm the sewer system, sending dirty untreated water into the Bay. When rainwater sheeting off concrete reaches a street tree basin or a larger sidewalk garden, the water can seep into the soil. This recharges our groundwater as the moisture filters itself through the earth in a natural way.

A Gem on Sanchez Street

One of the nicest sidewalk gardens in Noe Valley can be found on Sanchez Street between 27th and Comerford Alley. Around the young trees (*Ginkgo biloba*) and behind neat, low fences, an assortment of beautiful, rugged plants puts on a display all year long. In full bloom now are the dramatic kangaroo paws (*Anigozanthos*), surrounded by our native seathrift (*Armeria maritima*) and fresh-faced, drought-tolerant daisies.

Another flourishing sidewalk garden, the one that was the model for Just for Fun, is located at the corner of Day and Noe streets. A few blocks away, on Valley Street between Noe and Castro, a lush row of trees and hedges has created a bower that nearly hides the sidewalk.

If you want to see the ultimate poten-



Photo by Pamela Gerard

Fabulous Noe Valley Plant of the Month: Kangaroo Paw

Anigozanthos, or kangaroo paw, comes all the way from Australia, but it is appearing frequently now on Noe Valley sidewalks, such as this one on Sanchez Street near 27th Street. Its bright, fuzzy flowers (see fenced-in area, to the right of the staked tree) come in red, purple, green, and yellow, and attract hummingbirds. Tough and dramatic, the kangaroo paw is a fabulous plant!

—Hilary Gordon

tial of sidewalk gardens, step outside the borders of the neighborhood and journey along Noe Street between Market and Duboce Park. There, the container gardens, planting strips, and mature street trees have transformed the urban strip into a park-like experience. Couples sit on benches, flowers bloom all year-round, and birds chirp and twitter in the trees overhead. City noises fade, and even the air smells fresher.

Neighbors Walk the Walk

Back in Noe Valley, a most ambitious sidewalk garden project took place last fall on Alvarado Street between Douglass and Hoffman. The block has always been tightknit, partly because the neighbors hold a barbeque each fall. This past year, one of the residents, Karen Klein, put out a sign-up sheet during the annual barbeque to find out which of her neighbors wanted to remove the concrete in front of their houses in order to plant gardens. An amazing 19 families were not only interested, but attended meetings, filled out paperwork, and chipped in on planting day. In November, the concrete was removed; the trees and plants went in on Dec. 8. Hats off to anyone who can get a city project done that fast!

An Urban Meadow

The Alvarado sidewalk gardens boast a wide assortment of plants, including lots of California natives. Many are now

blooming for the first time, and the yellow blossoms of yarrow mix beautifully with swaying grasses where concrete lay just one year ago. "It was definitely worthwhile," says Klein. "I feel good every time I walk up and down the street. It's good for the planet, good for the city, and good for my neighbors."

The lovely and environmentally sensitive palette of plants from which the Alvarado neighbors chose is a tribute to the creativity of Doug Wildman, a representative of the non-profit Friends of

the Urban Forest, which agreed to steer the neighbors through the city planning process. Wildman did everything from filing permits to arranging for sidewalk removal to showing up with a truck full of baby greenery on planting day. "We removed 1,565 square feet of concrete," says Wildman. "But the amazing thing was, it was most of the neighbors on the block. Along with the Friends volunteers, they transformed the whole block."

Friends Make It Easier

Friends of the Urban Forest will help anyone who wants to plant sidewalk trees—whether you are a single homeowner or a group of residents. However, its target range for shepherding a sidewalk greening project is about 20 families clustered around a block or intersection. (Contact Suzanne Gavin, FUF's outreach coordinator, at 561-6890, ext. 101, or go to www.fuf.net.) Individuals who would like to do a sidewalk garden on their own should first call the city's Bureau of Urban Forestry at 641-2676.

These tree experts will tell you that late fall is the best time to plant in our climate. New plants use the coolest and wettest months of the year—December through February—to push their roots deep into the soil before enduring the stress of the dry summer months. That makes summer the ideal season to start the planning and permit process for a new sidewalk garden.

Douglass Street resident Hilary Gordon teaches organic gardening at the non-profit Garden for the Environment at Seventh Avenue and Lawton. You can meet her there on any open garden day: Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; or Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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The Cost of Living in Noe

Home Prices Still Stuck in Ozone

By Corrie M. Anders

Noe Valley home buyers purchased 10 properties in April, and prices continued to hold firm in the neighborhood.

The April sales total was one less than in March and two less than one year ago, according to Zephyr Real Estate, which provides monthly sales data to the *Noe Valley Voice*.

While the volume was down modestly, the average sales price of \$1.5 million was slightly higher than in April 2007. And as they have for the past few years, Noe buyers typically paid more than the asking price. Only one property sold for under \$1 million.

Buyers paid \$2.3 million for the most expensive property: a four-bedroom, 3½-bath home with 2,600 square feet, in the 400 block of Duncan Street, between Sanchez and Noe streets. The house closed escrow in 12 days.

Condominium sales were noticeably higher than in the past. Seven condos changed hands in April, compared with four in March and two in April of last year. The average sales price was nearly \$1.2 million. The condo with the highest sales price, \$1.7 million, was located in the 4300 block of 23rd Street, between Douglass Street and Hoffman Avenue. The three-bedroom, 3½-bath condo featured an impressive amount of living space: 3,100 square feet. ■

Noe Valley Home Sales*

Total Sales	No.	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price As % of List Price
Single-family homes						
April 2008	10	\$935,000	\$2,200,000	\$1,534,000	17	104%
March 2008	11	\$930,000	\$3,038,000	\$1,875,082	42	102%
April 2007	12	\$900,000	\$2,675,000	\$1,456,250	19	108%
Condominiums						
April 2008	7	\$800,000	\$1,700,000	\$1,174,000	31	105%
March 2008	4	\$595,000	\$1,300,000	\$950,000	27	103%
April 2007	2	\$1,010,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,205,000	23	105%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
April 2008	3	\$1,500,000	\$1,575,000	\$1,550,000	37	105%
March 2008	0	—	—	—	—	—
April 2007	4	\$1,190,000	\$1,750,500	\$1,580,000	43	112%
5+-unit buildings						
April 2008	0	—	—	—	—	—
March 2008	1	\$1,550,000	\$1,550,000	\$1,550,000	75	94%
April 2007	0	—	—	—	—	—

* Sales figures include all Noe Valley home sales completed during the month. Noe Valley is defined in this survey as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The *Voice* thanks Zephyr Real Estate (www.zephyr-re.com) for supplying the sales data. NVV 6/08

A Snapshot of Noe Valley Rents**

Type of Unit	Number in Sample	Range of Rents April-May 2008	Average April-May 2008	Average April-May 2007
Studio	5	\$1,400 – \$1,600	\$1,499 / mo.	\$1,500 / mo.
1-bedroom	31	\$1,395 – \$2,795	\$1,953 / mo.	\$1,854 / mo.
2-bedroom	22	\$2,180 – \$5,950	\$3,016 / mo.	\$2,397 / mo.
3-bedroom	8	\$2,800 – \$5,950	\$4,234 / mo.	\$4,125 / mo.
4+-bedroom	5	\$4,000 – \$9,600	\$5,940 / mo.	\$3,995 / mo.

** Survey based on a sample of 71 Noe Valley listings appearing on Craigslist from April 24 to May 14, 2008. NVV 6/08

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CRIME BEAT

Report from Mission Station

By Officer Jane Warner
San Francisco Patrol Special Police

The following crime summaries were culled from reports filed at Mission Police Station. They cover some but not all incidents occurring in Noe Valley from April 16 to May 15, 2008. "Noe Valley," in this instance, is the area bounded by Grand View, 20th, Guerrero, and Cesar Chavez streets—which falls within the Mission Police District.

Drunk in Public, 4200 block of 26th, 4-17-08, 10:32 p.m.: Police responded to a call from a couple who had discovered a man in their back yard. When officers arrived, they found the man curled up sound asleep in some bushes in the rear of the yard. Officers woke the man and noticed a heavy odor of alcohol. The man's speech was slurred, and he was unable to walk without staggering. "I'm not drunk!" the man yelled at the officers. "Prove it!" The 40-year-old man was taken to Mission Station and booked for public intoxication.

Attempted Robbery: 1200 block of Church, 4-20-08, 12:30 a.m.: A woman was walking south on Church Street near 24th when she heard footsteps behind her. Suddenly a man grabbed the strap of her shoulder bag and tried to run off with it. The woman screamed, and a tug of war over the bag ensued. "Let go of the purse," the suspect demanded as he continued to pull on the strap. The woman refused and continued to scream. The suspect gave up and ran toward Jersey Street, where he was met by two other men. The trio ran east on Jersey, where the victim lost sight of them. The suspects are described as males of unknown race, in their late teens or early 20s. All three were wearing baggy dark clothing. About a half-hour later, officers in the area were involved in a foot chase with two men who fit the description of the suspects in the attempted robbery. The men were detained, and the officers called the woman at home and asked if she would come to their location and identify the men they had detained. The woman declined, stating that she didn't think she could recognize them. The suspects were released from police custody.

Malicious Mischief, Graffiti: 600 block of Douglass, 4-20-08, 12:07 p.m.: The principal of a local elementary school looked out his window and saw two older teenage boys near an outside lunch table, one of whom was writing on the table with a felt pen. The principal went outside and confronted the teens. "What are you doing?" the principal asked. The one teen admitted to writing on the table and handed over a black king-size Sharpie. The principal called the police, who responded and notified the teens' parents, who arrived at the school. The principal declined to press charges, but asked that the damage be repaired. The parents of the teens agreed, and the boys were released to their custody.

Aggravated Assault with Knife: Dolores Park, 5-01-08, 2:14 p.m.: While patrolling the park during the International Workers Day "Stop the War" protest, two officers were flagged down by someone frantically pointing to the park's bathrooms. Officers could hear screaming coming from inside one of the bathrooms. As they ran toward the bathroom and looked in, they saw two men wrestling with each other. One held a knife over his head and was threatening to stab the other. Officers quickly drew their firearms and ordered the man to drop the knife. The man complied and was taken into custody without further incident. The victim, who wasn't injured, told officers the suspect had entered the bathroom, cutting in line. When other bathroom patrons complained, the suspect pulled out the knife and started swinging it at people waiting in line. The 62-year-old suspect was transported to Mission Station and booked for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and an outstanding warrant for \$290.93.

Armed Robbery: 3800 block of 24th, 5-10-08, 4:20 a.m.: A man wearing a mask entered a donut shop on 24th Street before dawn on Saturday morning, and pointed a gun at the store's employees and customers. "Open the register," he told one of the employees. Fearing for her life, the employee complied. The gunman went around the counter and removed an undisclosed amount of cash from the register. The robber ordered the employees to lie down on the floor and then turned his attention to one of the customers. "Empty your pockets," he demanded. The patron emptied his pockets, dropping about two dollars in loose change on the floor. The robber did not pick up the money, but instead ran out the door heading south on Church Street toward Jersey. One of the employees got up off the floor and called 911. Officers quickly responded and searched the area for the suspect, described as a black male, 30 years old, 5'10", 160 pounds, and wearing a skull cap, a black hooded sweatshirt, and black jeans. Police failed to locate the gunman.

Officer Jane Warner is a member of the San Francisco Patrol Special Police. You can reach her by e-mailing sfpatrol@earthlink.net or calling 559-9955.

Noe's Police Districts

Noe Valley falls under the jurisdiction of two San Francisco police districts: Mission and Ingleside. Mission Police Station covers the northern half of the neighborhood, including 24th Street, and Ingleside the southern half, starting at Cesar Chavez Street.

Both districts hold monthly meetings that are open to the public. Mission Police District's community meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month, at 6 p.m., at Mission Station, 630 Valencia Street near 17th Street. Ingleside's community meetings take place on the third Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m., at Ingleside Police Station off Balboa Park at San Jose Avenue. To contact Mission Police, call 558-5400 or e-mail SFPDMissionStation@ci.sf.ca.us. To contact Ingleside, call 404-4000 or e-mail SFPDInglesideStation@ci.sf.ca.us. To report a crime in progress, call 911. For non-emergencies, call 553-0123.

Report from Ingleside Station

The Voice thanks Ingleside Police Captain Denis O'Leary for providing the following crime log for Upper Noe Valley, an area roughly bordered by Cesar Chavez Street, Guerrero/San Jose Avenue, 30th Street, and Diamond Heights Boulevard. The log covers incidents reported from April 16 to May 15, 2008. If you would like to receive Capt. O'Leary's weekly e-mail newsletter, send an e-mail to InglesideStationNewslettersubscribe@yahoo.com. You may also view updates online at www.sfgov.org.

UPPER NOE VALLEY CRIME LOG

Capt. Denis O'Leary's Incident Report for April 16 to May 15, 2008

April 18, 4:45 p.m., Church and 30th: A 16-year-old student told some other students to wait for another bus because the Muni coach she was on was crowded. The other students got on the bus in spite of the teenager's entreaties. The teenager smelled smoke and realized that one of the other students had tried to burn her hair. The other students left the bus at Dolores and 30th streets.

April 18, 12:15 p.m., 29th and Dolores: Officer Najarro investigated a loud argument and stopped a vehicle involved on San Jose Avenue. He determined that no felony had occurred and released the two people he had stopped.

April 19, 9:30 p.m., 1700 block of Sanchez: A residential burglary occurred between 7 and 9 p.m. Entry was via an unlocked front door. A computer, camera, calculator, and cash were taken.

April 20, 7 p.m., 1600 block of Church: A commercial burglary occurred on April 19 or 20. There was no forced entry. A plasma television was taken.

April 23, 8:30 p.m., 1500 block of Guerrero: A residential burglary occurred between 9:45 a.m. and 8 p.m. Entry was via a bathroom window. Two computers and house keys were taken.

April 28, 5:20 a.m., 400 block of Valley: A 40-year-old man was delivering newspapers when two men approached him from a blue Nissan SUV. One of the men pointed a silver handgun at the newspaperman and demanded money. The victim complied with the robbers' demand, and the two men fled in the SUV.

April 28, 10:40 a.m., 2900 block of Diamond: A 41-year-old woman was waiting for a bus when a man pulled on her purse. The woman struggled with the man grabbing her purse, but he pushed her to the ground and ran away with her belongings. Several people saw this and gave chase to the man. A 42-year-old woman caught up with the robber at Diamond and Bosworth streets. She took the purse from the robber and returned it to its owner.

April 30, 9:30 a.m., 200 block of 29th: A resident locked her home and secured it. She returned that day at 11 p.m. The next day she realized that her laptop computer and jewelry were missing. Her roommate reported that his laptop computer and camera had been taken, too. No forced entry was found by investigating officers. The case was reported to police on May 4.

April 30, 8 p.m., Sanchez and 29th: A 16-year-old girl was walking on Sanchez Street

when a man approached from a black SUV. The man asked the teenager for directions and then grabbed her purse. They struggled over the purse until the robber produced a knife with a short blade. The girl let go of her purse, and the man fled in the SUV. Ingleside Station officers searched the neighborhood for the suspect, to no avail. A citizen called Ingleside Station to report a purse abandoned on his doorstep in the first block of Prospect Avenue in Bernal Heights. It was the victim's purse. A gift card and money had been taken.

May 3, 10:45 a.m., first block of 28th: A 2001 Chevrolet Malibu was reported stolen.

May 3, 2:28 p.m., 1700 block of Noe: Officer Coles investigated a vandalism call at a Muni bus shelter. Two suspects had written initials on the shelter's glass walls.

May 5, 12:15 a.m., Noe and Cesar Chavez: A robbery occurred in the neighborhood of 17th and Rhode Island streets. Plainclothes officers in the neighborhood had been following the vehicle involved in the crime without knowledge of the robbery, as it had not been reported to police. They followed the car through the Bernal Heights and Glen Park neighborhoods before learning of the robbery. The car was stopped at Noe and Cesar Chavez streets by officers from Ingleside Station. Three men, a 20-year-old Bayview resident, a 23-year-old Oakland resident, and an 18-year-old Portola District resident, were arrested and charged with the robbery. Case #080469078.

May 8, 7:35 a.m., 1500 block of Dolores: A parent contacted the police because a local resident had verbally harassed children on their way to school. Officer Jones and Officer Lee found the woman in question at home on the first block of Valley Street. They took the 39-year-old to San Francisco General Hospital for a psychiatric evaluation.

May 10, 2 p.m., 28th and Church: A 1993 Saturn SL was reported stolen.

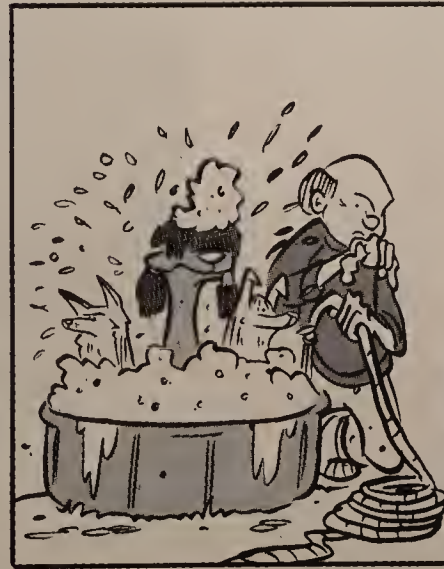
May 14, noon, 1600 block of Diamond: Officers Rallis and Valiquette took a 39-year-old South San Francisco man into custody after learning that the man had verbally harassed school children. The case was taken over by Inspector Clemmons of the Juvenile Bureau.

May 15, 3:45 p.m., 1700 block of Church: A woman set her purse beneath her chair as she dined on the sidewalk outside a restaurant. A thief took her handbag and ran away. A witness later returned the woman's wallet. He had found it at 24th and Vicksburg streets.

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Days of Glorious Rays. From the top of Dolores Park our first fogless photo of the summer season shows that early competition for lounging space on the grass is quite stiff indeed.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

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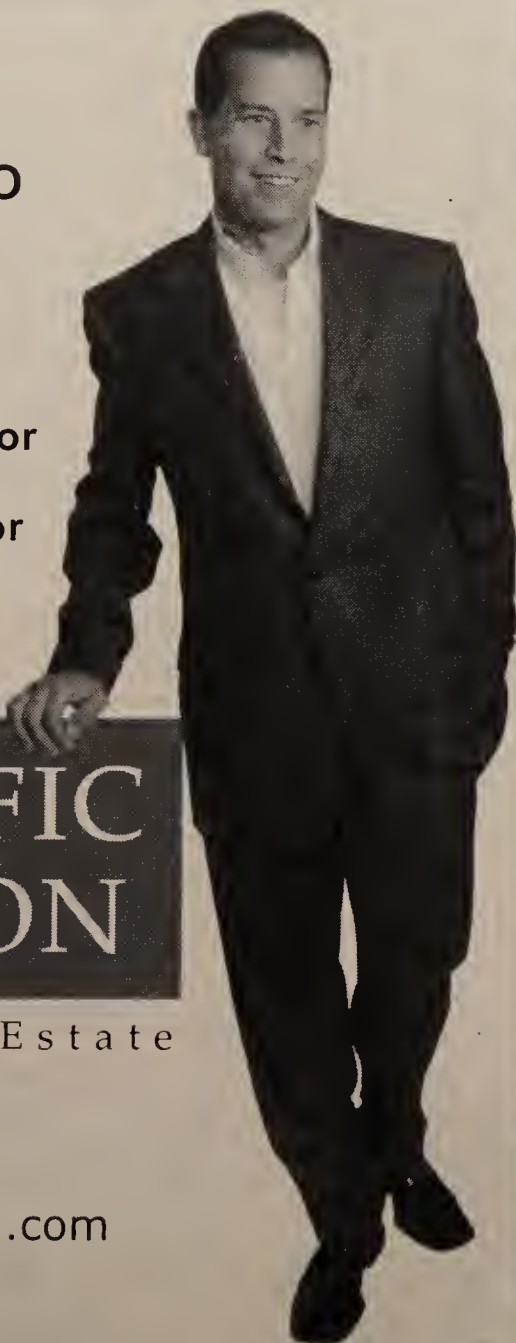
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SHORT TAKES

Harvest Comes in October

It's that time again. Noe Valley Harvest Festival organizers are scouting for volunteers to help make the fourth annual festival on 24th Street as successful as the last three. The crafts, food, and music extravaganza will close down 24th between Church and Sanchez from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 25, but friends and neighbors can help before the big date, too.

Also, the fair is looking for young designers (18 or under) who might want to enter the festival's logo contest. The winning design will be used on all advertisements and promotional materials. To get details about the contest, e-mail nvhf@yahoo.com or call graphic design consultant Mary Teahan-Duffy at 244-6145. Potential volunteers should contact the Harvest Fest Committee, chaired by Kathy White, at nvhf@yahoo.com.

The festival is co-sponsored by the Noe Valley Association (the community benefit district on 24th Street) and neighborhood groups including Friends of Noe Valley, the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association.

City College Summer Signup

Want to learn conversational Italian? How about French? Summer session for City College of San Francisco's satellite campus in Noe Valley starts on Tuesday, June 17. The Castro/Valencia campus, located at 1220 Noe Street within James Lick Middle School, will offer 20 seven-week classes, including art, foreign languages, English, music, speech, theater, and women's studies.

Classes meet Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6 to 9:45 p.m. through the end of July. Most courses offer three units credit; the cost is \$20 per unit.

For a catalog or to register online, go to www.ccsf.edu. You may also attend the first class, and if there is room, the instructor will give you a code to register late.

City College, which has a dozen campuses around the city, is open to anyone 18 and up. The Castro/Valencia campus has been holding a variety of credit and non-credit classes at James Lick since 2000. For information, call 550-4500.

Roadmap for Better Streets

Since last summer, more than 500 people have attended 25 community meetings to contribute their ideas for a "Better Streets Plan," a set of pedestrian-friendly guidelines for San Francisco's roads and walkways.

The meetings identified a number of goals the city should steer toward: street designs that slow traffic (such as curb extensions or more visible crosswalks); safer and more accessible sidewalks and intersections; more trees and greenery; better maintenance of streetscape elements; and better enforcement of laws related to cars parking on sidewalks, bicycles riding on sidewalks, and cars parking near corners.

Now, the Better Streets committee has come up with a draft plan, which it wants you to review at a new round of meetings. First, on Thursday, June 5, the proposals will be unveiled at a special event at Mint Plaza, Fifth and Jessie streets between Market and Mission, noon to 2 p.m. (Starting June 2, the Draft Plan can be downloaded from the city's website, www.sfgov.org.)

Next, residents are invited to attend a community meeting on Saturday, June 7, which starts with a walking tour. Meet at the Glen Park BART Station at 11 a.m. A presentation and comment session follows at noon at the Crocker-Amazon Se-

nior Apartments at 5199 Mission Street at Geneva.

Then on Thursday, June 12, the Better Streets Plan, along with several local groups including the San Jose Guerrero Coalition to Save Our Streets, will host a session from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at St. Luke's Hospital, 3555 Cesar Chavez Street at Valencia Street.

After receiving feedback from residents at these and other meetings this summer, city planners will tune up the plan. Eventually, it will be incorporated into the Better Streets Policy, adopted by the Board of Supervisors in February of 2006.

To get on board, call 558-6405 or e-mail info@sfbetterstreets.org.

Getting Nostalgic for Music?

The Noe Valley Music Series will present four diverse concerts this month, including a show featuring a lineup of 30 people singing on a single theme.

First, finger-style guitar virtuoso Pepino D'Agostino will play Saturday, June 7. Readers of *Guitar Player* magazine recently voted D'Agostino Best Acoustic Guitarist, and he's often put in the same league with John Fahey and Leo Kottke.

On Friday, June 13, former NPR commentator Merle Kessler (also a founding member of Duck's Breath Mystery Theatre) and his equally creative sidekick, comic/musician Joshua Brody, will host "An Evening of Song." Produced every few years or so, this event is the closest thing Noe Valley has to *American Idol*. This time, the theme will be memory/nostalgia, and the singers will each perform a song, with the backing of Brody's Experimental Love Orchestra.

The next night, Saturday, June 14, another award-winning jazz guitarist, Mimi Fox, will give an intimate solo concert featuring her own original pieces and selections by Cole Porter, George Gershwin, and Hoagy Carmichael.

Two weeks later, on Saturday, June 28, the "post-folk" a cappella band Moira Smiley & Voco—known for its lush harmonies backed by cello, accordion, and banjo—will take the stage following a set by Keith Terry (Crosspulse) and Evie Ladin (Stairwell Sisters), a duo playing on box, bells, banjo, and body.

Musician Larry Kassin started the Noe Valley Music Series in 1981, and has since drawn in a wide range of music, from bluegrass to jazz to Indian classical flute. All performances are 8:15 p.m. in the upstairs sanctuary at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez Street. Go to www.noevalleymusicseries.com or call 454-5238 for more information. Tickets run \$16 to \$20. Advance tickets, which are \$2 cheaper, can be bought at Streetlight Records on 24th Street.

Making Clay for the Mud Bus

Ruby's Clay Studio, a neighborhood fixture since the 1960s, will host "Ruby's in the Park," a benefit show featuring more than 20 artists, on Saturday and Sunday, June 14 and 15. Proceeds will go to the studio's Mud Bus outreach program to underserved communities.

From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days, artists will display high-fire and low-fire sculptures—from nudes to bowls—at the Golden Gate Park Hall of Flowers at Ninth Avenue and Lincoln Way. Admission is free, and artists will host hands-on clay-making classes for children while their parents browse. (Sorry, no kiln-firing.) Attendees can enter a raffle to win selected clay work.

The Mud Bus is a mobile clay studio that takes artist-teachers to places like the Tenderloin Children's Playground and Mercy Senior Housing Center. After showing participants how to create their own ceramics, the artists then fire the work back at Ruby's and later return the finished pieces of art.

Ruby's, named for its founder Ruby O'Burke, opened its doors at 552A Noe in 1967. The studio fosters work by artists and encourages art appreciation through exhibits, classes, and clay resources.

For more information, call Ruby's Clay Studio at 558-9819 or visit its website at <http://rubysclaystudio.org/>.

Picnic for Pawsability, Take Two

Last year, a group of San Francisco dog lovers put two puppies behind bars, and on Saturday, June 14, they hope to do it again.

Picnic for Pawsability, a picnic held in Glen Park Canyon, raises funds for two canine-related programs: Puppies Behind Bars, a New York-based program that provides opportunities for prison inmates to raise and train service and guide dogs; and Pen Pals, a San Quentin State Prison program in which inmates learn to socialize and train dogs for placement with families.

Last year's event, which raised over \$5,000, sponsored two dogs, Kayla and Quentin, in the Puppies Behind Bars program, and also donated funds to Pen Pals.

The picnic, scheduled from 1 to 3:30 p.m., will feature food donated by local businesses, live music, a raffle, a jumpy-house for kids, and lots of friendly dogs. Suggested donation is \$20.

To get the real scoop, visit www.picnicforpawsability.com.

The Home of Homeopathy

How many times have you walked by the northeast corner of Sanchez and 25th streets and wondered what goes on in the pale-avocado storefront with "Lipton's Tea" and "Homeopathy" in the window? Well, now is your chance to find out.

The Pacific Academy of Homeopathy is inviting the neighborhood to an open house on Wednesday, June 18, from 7 to

9 p.m. Academy Director Richard Pitt will give a short talk on homeopathy, which he describes as a "green" alternative to traditional medicine.

The evening will also give visitors a chance to meet students and teachers in the academy's three-year homeopathy training program and to learn about its low-cost community clinics in both San Francisco and Berkeley.

There will be light refreshments and "lots of time to have your questions answered," Pitt says. For more information, call the school at 695-2710 or e-mail health@homeopathy-academy.org.

Focus on Irish History

On Tuesday, June 24, the two authors of *Irish San Francisco*, a photo history of one of the city's most prominent ethnic groups, will be the guest speakers at a meeting of the San Francisco History Association at St. Philip's Church.

Historian John Garvey and archaeologist Karen Hanning will also sign copies and introduce some special guests from the pages of their book, published by Arcadia Publishing in March. *Irish San Francisco* has more than 200 vintage photographs tracing Irish footsteps from the 1850s to today.

Doors at the church, at Diamond and 24th streets, will open at 7 p.m., and the meeting will begin at 8 p.m. The cost of admission is \$5.

To find out more about the association, described by the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* as the "Best Place to Meet Senior Hipsters," call board president Ron Ross at 750-9986 or visit the group's website at www.sanfranciscohistory.org.

This month's Short Takes were written by Heather World, Rosie Ruley Atkins, and Sally Smith.

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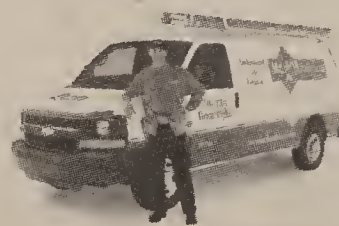
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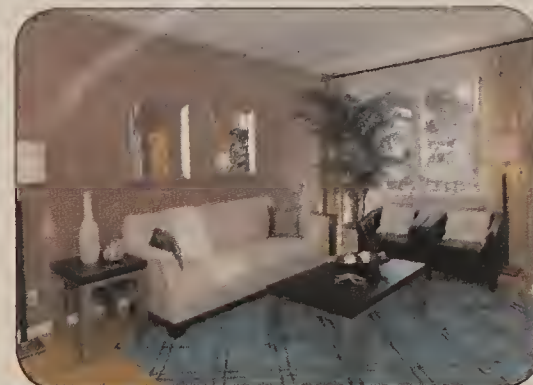
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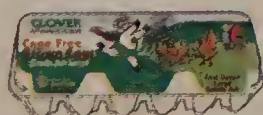
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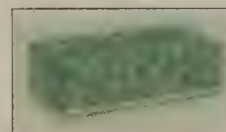
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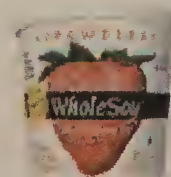
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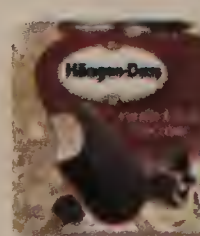
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June 1-July 3: In "Hopeless and Otherwise," an ART EXHIBIT at Southern Exposure Gallery, artists address the current state of America. 417 14th. 863-2141; www.soex.org.

June 2-30: OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS meets Monday thru Saturday, 7 to 8 am. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

June 2-30: Noe Valley SENIOR CENTER serves hot lunches for people over 60, weekdays at 12:30 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 648-1030.

June 2-30: The Caper Cutters SQUARE DANCE Club offers Monday dance classes for beginners. 7:30-8:45 pm. St. Paul's Presbyterian, 43rd & Judah aves. 647-2483.

June 3 & 5: A PUBLIC FORUM to discuss plans for an acute care hospital and outpatient services at St. Luke's meets from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Cesar Chavez Elementary School, 825 Sholwell. <http://blueribbonst.com>.

June 3 & 10: The Noe Valley Library sponsors LAPSITS for babies and toddlers at 10:15 am, and preschool STORY TIME at 11 am. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; www.sjpl.org.

June 3-10: Ron Haviv's PHOTOGRAPHY exhibit, "The Children of Darfur," features a performance by Y.M.R. All-Stars at a reception on June 4 (7 to 9 pm), Mission Cultural Center, 2868 Mission. 252-1750.

June 3, 10, 17 & 24: "Tot/Parent Spanish," sponsored by LANGO, begins at 10 am. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317; www.langokids.com.

June 3, 10, 17 & 24: Chris Sequeira gives a beginners TAI CHI class at 6 pm on Tuesdays. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. Register: 773-8185 or 650-756-6857.

June 3-30: Elena Sheehan and Yong Han exhibit photographs and SCULPTURE at the Rozanoff Art Gallery. Reception June 8, 3-6 pm. 355 29th. 916-0899; rozanoffart.com.

June 4-28: City Art Gallery hosts a group show, "QUEER." Reception June 6, 7-10 pm; Wed.-Sun., noon-9 pm. 828 Valencia. 970-9900; www.cityartgallery.org.

June 5: Religious Witness with Homeless People sponsors a gathering of 50 religious leaders hoping to influence city budget priorities. 10:30-11:30 am. City Hall. 929-0781.

June 5-8: The Stephen Pelton Oance Theater performs at DANCE Mission Theater. Thurs.-Sat., 8 pm; Sun. 7 pm. 3316 24th. 273-4633.

June 5, 12, 19 & 26: A Thursday STROLLER WALK rolls from Holey Bagel at 11 am. 3872 24th. www.noestrolls.com.

June 6: Intersection for the Arts' annual fundraising ART AUCTION features performances, music, and refreshments. 7 pm. 446 Valencia. 626-2787; www.theintersection.org.

June 6, 13, 20 & 27: CLARE tells entrancing tales at Cover to Cover's Friday story hour. 10:30 am. 1307 Castro. 282-8080.

June 6, 13, 20 & 27: Bird & Beckett bookstore hosts a CHILDREN'S STORY TIME Fridays at 11 am. 653 Chenery. 586-3733.

June 6, 13, 20 & 27: Friday BINGO at St. Paul's begins at 7 pm (doors open at 5 pm). Parish Hall, 221 Valley. 648-7538.

June 6-19: Comic HORROR and sci-fi movies fill the screen at the Roxie for yet Another Hole in the Head Film Festival. 3117 16th. 820-3907; www.sfindie.com.

June 6-July 9: Local artist ELLEN INTO exhibits paintings at Hill & Co. Real Estate. 24th at Sanchez. 550-8864.

June 7 & July 5: The Swinging GUITARS of Tom Huber and Misisipi Mike (8:30 am) and Failure to Oisperse (10:30 am) play the Farmers' Market. 24th & Vicksburg. 248-1332; www.noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

June 7: The Glen Park Library offers an introductory class in MOUSE and keyboard skills; sign up beforehand. 2-3 pm. 2825 Diamond. 355-2858.

June 7: SF City Chorus performs "A Night at the OPERA." 7:30 pm. Trinity Episcopal Church, 1668 Bush. 701-7664, www.sfcitychorus.org.

June 7: Stephen Ouffy and That Man Fantastic perform URBAN PRAIRIE MUSIC at the Make-Out Room. 8-11 pm. 3225 22nd. 647-2888; www.makeoutroom.com.

June 7: Acoustic GUITARIST Peppino O'Agostino gives a concert at the Noe Valley Ministry. 8:15 pm. 1021 Sanchez. 454-5238; www.noevalleymusicseries.com.

June 7: FILM NIGHT in the Park features *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* at dusk in Washington Square Park. www.sfnf.org.

June 7-Aug. 10: The Randall Museum's seven-weekend SF URBAN PERMACULTURE course teaches sustainable systems. Sat. & Sun., 9 am-5 pm. 199 Museum Way. 225-7941, www.randallmuseum.org.

June 8: Animal Care and Control offers a free MICROCHIPPING clinic for cats and dogs. 1-4 pm. 1200 15th. 554-6364.

June 8: The monthly meeting of PFLAG Support Group features a speaker from Larkin Street Youth Services. 2-4 pm. St. Francis Lutheran Church, 152 Church. 921-8850; www.pflagst.org.

June 8: Noe Valley PHOTOGRAPHER Claire Lewis introduces a memoir about her wedding experiences, *Exposed*. 4-6 pm. Cover to Cover, 1307 Castro. 282-8080; www.covertocoversf.com.

June 10: Forbeadin offers a 3-0 WIRE SCULPTURE class from 6 to 9 pm. 1195 Church. 641-1414; www.forbeadin.com.

June 10: Cutting Ball THEATER continues its "Hidden Classics" series, featuring readings from classic plays. 7 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia. 282-9246.

June 10-Aug. 5: The Freedom Socialist Party sponsors a READING GROUP to discuss *Viva La Raza*. 7-8:30 pm. Cafetazo Café, 3087 16th. 864-1278.

June 11: The SF SPCA and CLAW host the seventh annual Hats Off fashion show, auction, and luncheon benefit. 11:30 am-2:30 pm. Prescott Hotel, 545 Post. 522-3564.

June 11: C.J. Grossman from the SF Center for the Book leads a workshop in MATCH-BOX BOOKS, for crafters age 16 and older. 6:30-8:30 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; www.sjpl.org.

June 11: Michelle Tea hosts the Eureka Valley Library's RAOAR SALON, featuring Thea Hillman and Rhiannon Argo. 7-8:30 pm. Three Oollar Bill Café, 1800 Market. 557-4353; www.sjpl.org.

June 11: Writer Mel Clay narrates an appreciation of photographer OLANE ARBUS. 7:30 pm. Bird & Beckett, 653 Chenery. 586-3733.

June 11: The Richmond AIOS Foundation presents "COMEDY Tonight," with performances by Sharon McNight, Judy Tenuta, and Bruce Vilanch. 8 pm. Theatre 39 on Pier 39. 273-1620; www.helpisontheway.org.

June 12: The BETTER STREETS Plan and the San Jose Guerrero Coalition to Save Our Streets host a community meeting on the proposed plan. 6:30-8 pm. St. Luke's Hospital, 3555 Cesar Chavez. 558-6405; info@stbetterstreets.org.

June 12: Immaculée Ilbagiza shares her story, told in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the RWANDAN GENOCIDE*. 7 pm. St. Paul's Church, Church & Valley. 648-7538.

June 12: ATA screens *Black Gold*, a documentary about coffee and free trade. 992 Valencia. 821-65545; www.atasite.org.

June 13: MERLE KESSLER and Joshua Brody present "An Evening of Song," featuring 30 songsters, at the Noe Valley Ministry. 8:15 pm. 1021 Sanchez. 454-5238; www.noevalleymusicseries.com.

June 13 & 14: Faculty and alumni artists at NEW COLLEGE hold two final performances to mark the closing of the school in "Last Rites for the Lost Republic, 1971-2008." 8 pm. 777 Valencia. 282-7746.

June 14: Forbeadin' offers a JEWELRY class, "Wire Wrapping." 10 am-12:30 pm. 1195 Church. 641-1414, www.lorbeadin.com.

June 14: The Eureka Branch Library invites kids to come sing Spanish and English melodies with GUITARIST Susan Peña. 10:30 am. LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market. 557-4353; www.sjpl.org.

June 14: Bat Makumba and Forro Brazuca perform live music at the ELBO ROOM. 10 pm. 647 Valencia. 552-7788, www.elbo.com.

June 14-July 12: Little Tree Gallery hosts an exhibit of PAINTING, sculpture, photography, and textiles, "Soft Underbelly/Recognition." Reception June 14, 6-9 pm; Wed.-Sat., noon-6 pm. 3412 22nd. 643-4929.

June 14: The Noe Valley Farmers' Market hosts MUSIC by the Faux Brummels (8:30 am) and They Call Me Lucky (10:30 am). 24th & Vicksburg. 248-1332; www.noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

June 14: The Nick Barone PUPPETS perform "Tales from the Enchanted Forest," especially for ages 2 to 9. 11 am-noon. Oolores Park Playground, 19th & Oolores. 285-3774; www.friendsdolorespark.org.

June 14: The free "Women Wielding Cameras" FILM FESTIVAL features political films with discussion after each screening. 11 am-5:30 pm. Main Library, Koret Auditorium, 100 Larkin. www.imow.org.

June 14: The second annual "PICNIC for Pawsability," with live music, a raffle, and kids' activities, benefits Puppies Behind Bars and Pen Pals, programs for inmates to train service and guide dogs. 1-3:30 pm. Glen Park Canyon. www.picnicforpawsability.com.

June 14: Learn how to do REOWORK embroidery in the library's "Get Crafty" series; for ages 16 and up. (Bring a small embroidery hoop and a design.) 2-4 pm. Glen Park Library, 2825 Diamond. 355-2858.

June 14: The Kansas City HILLBILLY RIOT features the Wilders and Squirrelly String Band. 8 pm. Swedish American Hall, 2174 Market. 861-5016; www.cafedunord.com.



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Sat.

June 7

PEPPINO D' AGOSTINO - Dazzling Solo Guitar

Fri.

June 13

J. RAOUL BRODY & MERLE KESSLER Host

- An Evening of Song with 30 Singers

Sat.

June 14

MIMI FOX - Virtuoso Guitar

Sat.

June 28

VOCO - A Cappella Sweepstakes Winners

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CALENDAR

June 14: JAZZ GUITARIST Mimi Fox performs at the Noe Valley Ministry focusing on American classics. 8:15 pm. 1021 Sanchez. 454-5238; www.noevalleymusicseries.com.

June 14-15: Ruby's CLAY Studio holds a show and sale in Golden Gate Park to benefit its art program for underserved communities. 10 am-4 pm. Hall of Flowers, 9th Ave. & Lincoln. 558-9819; <http://rubysclaystudio.org>.

June 16: NUTRITION scientist Dr. Christopher Gardner from Stanford discusses the relationship between food and health. 7-9 pm. Atlas Café, 3049 20th. 648-1047; www.sciencecafeesf.com.

June 16-20 & 23-27: Summer OAY CAMP at Terra Mia features a week of creativity for ages 5 to 13. 10 am-2 pm. 1314 Castro. Register at 281-9768; for info, 642-9911.

June 17: FILMS for preschoolers include *A Boy, a Dog, and a Frog*, *The Little Engine That Could*, and *Log Driver's Waltz*. 10:15-11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; www.sfpl.org.

June 17: Classes in the seven-week summer session start at CITY COLLEGE's Noe Valley campus. Register online at www.ccsf.edu. James Lick Middle School, 1220 Noe. 550-4500.

June 18: Come play Guitar Hero and Dance Revolution at GAME NIGHT at the Mission Library. 6 pm. 300 Bartlett. 355-2800.

June 18: The Noe Valley Ministry offers a candlelight LABYRINTH WALK with Gregorian and Taizé chants. 6:30-7:30 pm. 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

June 18: Pacific Academy of HOMEOPATHY holds an open house where you can meet teachers and students. 7-9 pm. 1199 Sanchez. 695-2710; www.homeopathy-academy.org.

June 18: Author Theodore Hamm covers Michael Moore and Jon Stewart in his book *New BLUE MEDIA*. 7 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia. 282-9246.

June 18: Veteran Broadway performer Judith Blazer leads a MASTER CLASS in

singing, "Metamorphosis of Style." 7:30 pm. The Marsh, 1062 Valencia. 826-5750; www.themarsh.org.

June 18-21: The Primitive Screwheads THEATER troupe stages *Kentucky Jones and the Carpet of Doom* as part of the Hole in the Head festival. 8 pm. Brava Theatre, 2781 24th. 820-3907; www.sfindie.com.

June 19: Tommy Netband, a GHOST HUNTER from the SF Ghost Society, talks to teens 12 to 18 about his experiences investigating hauntings. 4-5:30 pm. Glen Park Library, 2825 Diamond. 355-2832.

June 19: Terence Kissack talks about his BOOK *Free Comrades: Anarchism and Homosexuality in the United States*. 7 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia. 282-9246.

June 20: YAPPY HOUR at the Oragon Bar benefits the SF SPCA; kibbles and water provided for dogs. 6-9 pm. 473 Broadway. 522-3564; www.sfsPCA.org.

June 20: The SF OPERA offers a free live simulcast of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, performed at the War Memorial Opera House. 8 pm. AT&T Park. Register for seats at www.sfopera.com/giants.

June 21: Jude (8:30 am) and Misissippi Mike & Friends (10:30 am) perform at the Farmers' Market. 24th & Vicksburg. 248-1332; www.noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

June 21: MAGIC OAN does tricks and jokes for children of all ages at the Noe Valley Library. 11-11:45 am. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; www.sfpl.org.

June 21: A SUMMER SOLSTICE celebration at the Garden for the Environment includes live bluegrass and old-time music, and a potluck barbecue; bring a dish to share and your own plates and utensils. 5 pm-sunset. Lawton & 7th Ave. 731-5627.

June 21: A PROGRESSIVE READING to support progressive candidates includes appearances by Eileen Myles, Andrew Sean Greer, and ZZ Packer. 7 pm. The Makeout Room, 3225 22nd. 647-2888; www.progressivereadingseries.org.

June 21: The Community Music Center FLUTE CHOIR performs a concert featuring Paula O'Oyen. 7 pm. Community Music Center, 544 Capp. www.sfcmc.org.

June 21: The non-profit Fear of Flying Clinic begins its two-weekend summer WORKSHOP at SF Airport for people dealing with aerophobia. 650-341-1595; fofc.com.

June 22: A fused chain class at FOR-BEAON' runs from 11 am to 2 pm. 1195 Church. 641-1414; www.forbeadin.com.

June 22: Dan Liberthson reads from his new book of POETRY, *The Pitch Is On the Way: Poems from Baseball and Life*. 2:30 pm. Bird & Beckett, 653 Chenery. 586-3733.

June 22: ArtZone 461 Gallery holds a grand opening and BENEFIT for Visual Aid, featuring established and emerging artists. 4-8 pm. 461 Valencia. 441-8680; www.art-zone461.com.

June 23: Edith E. Hartnett reads from *Breath on the Water*, and Ramon Sender reads from *A Planetary Sojourn* at the ODO MONOAYS series at the Noe Valley Ministry. 7 pm, no-host dinner at Noe Valley Pizza, 5:30 pm (RSVP jlsender@webtv.net). 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

June 24: It's Yoga, Kids offers a class for ages 5 and younger, "YOGA! YOGA!" Bring a towel or mat. 10:15 & 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; www.sfpl.org.

June 24: Authors John Garvey and Karen Henning, and other longtime residents with Irish roots, discuss the book *IRISH San Francisco* at the SF History Association meeting. 7 pm. St. Philip's Church, 725 Diamond. 750-9986; www.sanfranciscohistory.org.

June 25: RAMON SENDOER is among the participants at a panel discussion, book-signing, and demonstration of the SF Tape Music Center's Buchla Box. 7 pm. Park Branch Library, 1833 Page. 335-5656.

June 25: JEANNE HAYNES performs a one-woman show, *The Stove Is White*, featuring a cast of characters she met during the 60s civil rights struggles. 7:30 pm. The Marsh, 1062 Valencia. 826-5750; www.themarsh.org.

June 26: Peekabootique's PARENTS PARTY offers wine, Orangina, and goldfish crackers. Last Thursday of the month. 5:30-7:30 pm. 1306 Castro. 641-6192.

June 26: 826 Valencia hosts a panel discussion moderated by Eli Horowitz, "Writing and Publishing the SHORT STORY." 6-9 pm. 642-5905; www.826valencia.org.

June 26: City College field ornithology instructor Joseph Morlan discusses BIRO PHOTOGRAPHY. 7:30 pm. Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way. 554-9600; www.randall-museum.org.

June 26-Aug. 6: ART EXHIBIT "INsects INsectos" features the work of artists from Creativity Explored. Reception June 26, 7-9 pm. 3245 16th. 863-2108; www.creativityexplored.org.

June 27: PARENTS' NIGHT OUT on the last Friday of the month at Bethany United Methodist Church offers games, movies, naps, and refreshments for children, from 5 to 10 pm. 1268 Sanchez. 647-8397.

June 28: Oamond Moodie (8:30 am) and Oevil's Slide (10:30 am) play the FARMERS' MARKET. 24th & Vicksburg. 248-1332.

June 28: Boswick the CLOWN, formerly with the Ringling Brothers Circus, performs magic and juggling. 11-11:45 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; www.sfpl.org.

June 28: The Older Women's League (OWL) screens a DOCUMENTARY FILM, *Let's Face It: Women Explore Their Aging Faces*. 10 am. 870 Market, room 1185. 989-4422; www.owlsf.org.

June 28: Cover to Cover hosts a story time with PETIT NICHOLAS featuring hot chocolate and croissants at 3 pm. 1307 Castro. 282-8080; www.covertocoversf.com.

June 28: The annual FUR BALL at the SF Zoo offers live music, cocktails, and hors d'oeuvres to benefit conservation education. 8 pm-midnight. 1 Zoo Road. 753-7173.

June 28: Voted the #1 a cappella band in the U.S., Moira Smiley & Voco perform at the Noe Valley Ministry. 8:15 pm. 1021

Sanchez. 454-5238; www.noevalleymusicseries.com.

June 28: Free FILM NIGHT in the Park features *All About Eve* at dusk in Union Square Park. www.sfntf.org.

June 28 & 29: The 38th annual SF LGBT PRIOE Celebration includes Saturday festivities in the Civic Center, noon to 6 pm, and the Sunday parade on Market Street, beginning 10:30 am; Noe Valley Ministry will have a contingent. 864-0831; www.sfpride.org.

June 29: The Hapa Haole Boys perform vintage HAWAIIAN MUSIC and country blues at Bird & Beckett. 4:30 pm. 653 Chenery. 586-3733; www.birdbeckett.com.

June 29: Yaelisa and her Caminos Flamencos perform "CAFÉ FLAMENCO," presented by ODC Theater. 7-9 pm. Project Artaud Theater, 450 Florida. 863-9834; www.odctheater.org.

June 29: The SF Bicycle Coalition hosts an Almost Solstice NIGHT RIDE to the giant sundial; meet at the Panhandle Statue, Fell and Baker, at 7:30 pm. 431-BIKE; www.sfbike.org.

July 2-6: Noe Valley artist BEN OOMINGUEZ shows paintings at the Marin County Fair, San Rafael. 647-6050.

July 6: Rocket DOG RESCUE shows off dogs who need homes. Noon-4 pm. Zephyr Real Estate, 4040 24th. 642-4786.

What's Due June 15

The next *Noe Valley Voice* will be the July/August issue, appearing in Noe Valley by Friday, July 4. If you send us your calendar items by the **June 15** deadline, we'll do our best to publish them. Write *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114, or e-mail calendar@noevalleyvoice.com. Note: Events in Noe Valley get first preference, but we'll consider items from all around the city.

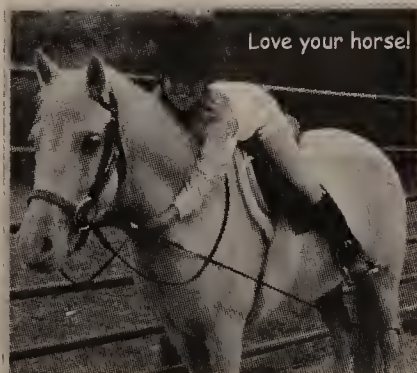
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An Evening With Immaculée



Immaculée Ilibagiza is the author of the international best-seller, "Left To Tell," a memoir of the Rwandan genocide. During this horrific ordeal, Immaculée lost most of her family but lived to tell the story of her anguish and of her extraordinary transition to forgiveness.

Immaculée has appeared on PBS, "60 Minutes" and "Oprah", providing inspiration to audiences around the globe.

We invite you to join us for this very special evening to hear Immaculée share her remarkable spiritual journey out of horror into faith, hope, and ultimately forgiveness.

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STORE TREK

Sore Trek is a regular feature of the *Noe Valley Voice*, profiling new stores and businesses in Noe Valley. This month, we introduce the neighborhood's shadiest new retailer, a sunglasses boutique on 24th Street near Noe Street.

GLARE
4010 24th Street
415-341-1454

<http://glaresunglasses.blogspot.com/>

Noe Valley has a new destination for hip shades. Just don't expect to find the usual department-store suspects gracing this boutique's contemporary interiors and sleek shelves.

"It's one of our main pet peeves. We will not carry a designer if it has the logo on the temple," explains Dimitri Grunhauser, who with Olga Terry owns Glare, as well as eyewear store Spectacles for

Humans, also on 24th Street.

Since opening the doors of their second storefront, in the former home of Primadonna Skin Care—and before that, High Class Nails—on Easter weekend, Grunhauser and Terry, both Alameda residents, have offered a carefully chosen selection of premium frames from cult-worthy names like Linda Farrow Vintage, Ksubi, Thakoon, Beausoleil, and Dita. Prices range from \$195 to \$395, for limited-edition or otherwise special frames.

"We don't buy what salespeople tell us will sell. We follow our instincts and know what's real and what's a gimmick," says Grunhauser.

Eschewing the major fashion houses for smaller brands has won the new sunglasses shop and its older sister, Spectacles for Humans, attention on fashion blogs and popular shopping web sites like Superfuture.com. Grunhauser says customers from around the country often e-mail pictures of themselves and ask his advice on flattering frames.

The only major household name the shop carries is Ray-Ban, but Grunhauser and Terry are quick to stress that they only



Customers can try on row after row of premium sunglasses at Glare, a new eyewear boutique on 24th Street.

Photo by Pamela Gerord

stock classics like Wayfarers, Shooters, and Caravans, in original or limited-edition colors. If their attention to the brands they carry sounds almost obsessive, that's because it is.

"There's really no sunglasses store for an intelligent consumer where you can get a cool pair of sunglasses and not wear a designer name on your face," says Grunhauser, an optician who began working in the eyewear industry shortly after moving to San Francisco in 1991. He operated BP Optical at a Valencia Street location for 10 years before relocating the store to 24th Street in 2006. In 2007, the store adopted its longtime tagline as its official name, Spectacles for Humans.

These days, if you don't find Grunhauser in one of the two shops, you're likely to spot him shuttling back and forth along 24th Street on his lavender and white 1985 BMX bike (all original parts, mind you).

Grunhauser sums it all up: "At a certain point, it stops being business. It's a hobby. When you work on something for years, this is the only way to sell it, to have brands that you're excited about."

Glare is open Wednesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m.

—Lorraine Sanders



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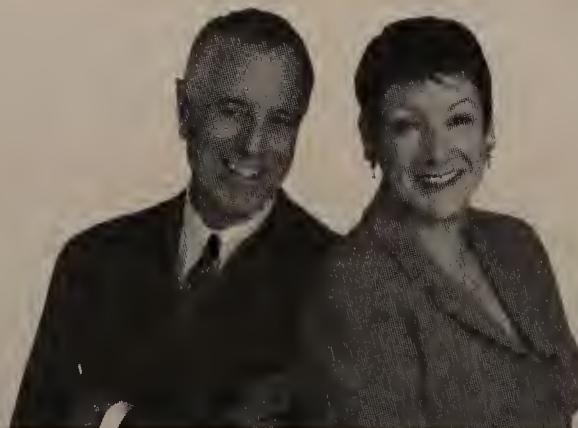


NOE VALLEY Great open floor plan in this 2BD/2BA/2PKG condo just 1.5 blocks to the great restaurants and shops of 24th St. Small deck off kitchen + direct access to yard + 2 car pkg at back. Laundry + storage too. **Offered at \$845,000**

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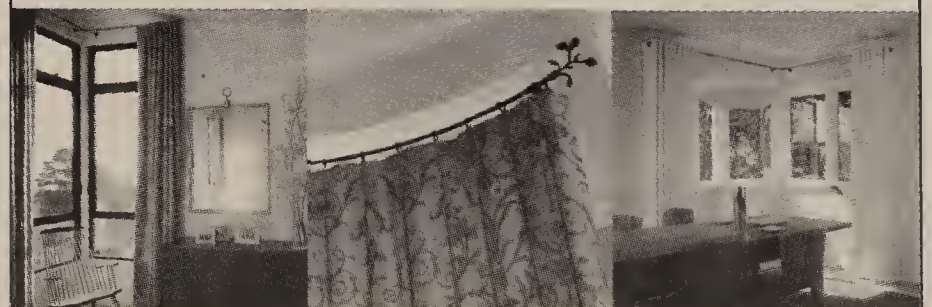


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A Midsummer to Remember

Editor's Note: In this essay, first published in the July 1995 Voice, Florence Holub describes a trip to Finland that got warmer with each passing day.

In early 1970, my aunt Marie, who lived in Finland, died at 80 years of age. My father, the only surviving child from a brood of seven, was summoned to Vora, the village where he had been born 83 years earlier. When he went back to Vora to settle his sister's estate, I accompanied him.

We left sunny Noe Valley in mid-May and were transported to a cold, gloomy landscape. Luckily, we were able to live in the comfortable new apartment Marie had purchased for her august years, one built expressly for Finland's senior citizens.

We intended to get down to business and settle her affairs well before our scheduled departure on July 1, but little did we know how slow and complicated Finnish law was, nor that there would be only one judge for the entire area.

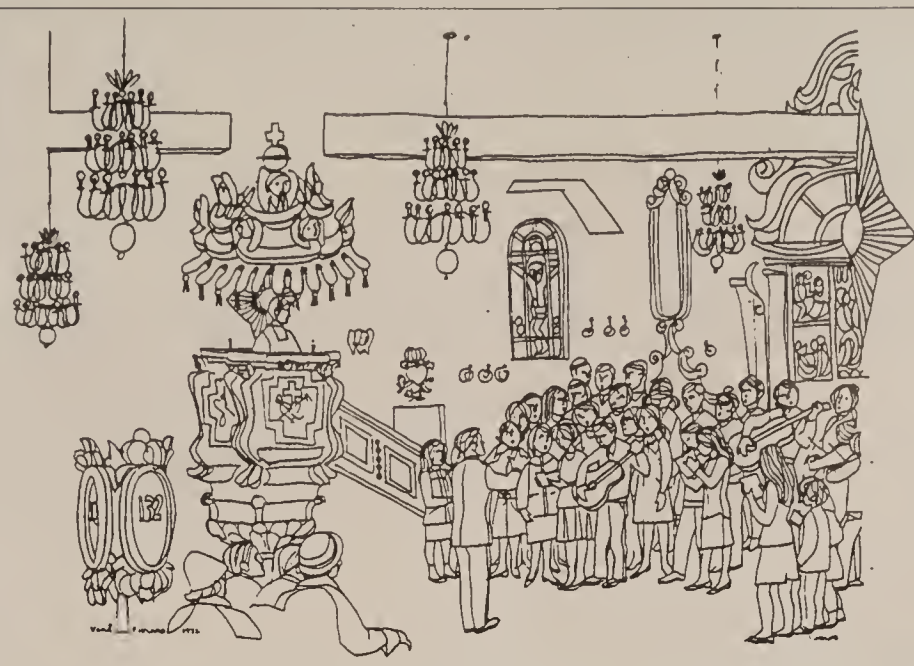
To further complicate matters, the probate papers were written in a Swedish legal jargon that was incomprehensible to us both, even though my father knew Swedish.

(In Vora, as in much of western Finland, the Swedish language is spoken, because the people there are descendants of Swedish immigrants. For 600 years, Finland was considered a part of the Swedish realm—until the Napoleonic Wars during the early 1800s, when it was swallowed up by the Russian Empire. Only since 1917 has Finland been a free and independent democracy.)

Fortunately, Aunt Marie had anticipated the language problem and arranged for two friends, Rego and Linnea, to assist us. Not only did they escort us through the mounds of red tape, they also became our constant companions as we settled into the simple life of Vora's rural farming community.

Finland is on the same latitude as Alaska and has the same extreme seasons. On June 22, which is the summer solstice and therefore the longest day of the year, the sun doesn't set until almost midnight and it rises again after only two hours of dusk. Summer comes after many months of long, dark winter nights—nights that last for most of the day.

Not until I realized this did I fully understand why Scandinavians celebrate the coming of the solstice with



such joyful enthusiasm: they are ecstatic because the sunlight has finally returned.

Throughout our stay we heard the sound of tractors plowing day and night, since the sun shines nearly round the clock in the weeks before and after the solstice. Farmers in Finland, beginning in late May and continuing through summer, cultivate their fields almost continuously, planting and harvesting one crop after another in rapid succession.

They can do this because the crops—potatoes, beets, and rye—grow at an amazingly accelerated rate until the fall. (I saw dandelions three times as large as any I'd ever seen in California!)

Compared to San Francisco, life moves slowly in Vora, but even so, the weeks flew by. Each Sunday, we awoke to the sound of church bells ringing. Soon after the bells, Rego would arrive to drive us to the Lutheran Church, built in 1624 and enlarged in 1777.

Originally a Catholic church, the building had a cross-shaped floor plan, hand-hewn rafters, and murals on the ceiling. Ancient and beautiful religious artifacts graced the walls. The tall, dark, shingled spire that rose above the facade reminded me of the Noe Valley Ministry on Sanchez Street. And I found the happy atmosphere and music—even though I didn't understand many of the words—heartwarming.

I soon learned that much of the social life in Vora revolved around the church, as it had done for centuries. The good folk congregated after church to discuss the goings-on in town. My father and I were the latest topic, for it seemed that we were related to most of the people in the area.

Invitations to dine came from every direction, and we were inundated with photographs and family trees that showed our remote familial connections. We attended the high school graduations of several newfound relatives, and were impressed to see how they had all mastered the languages vital to international diplomacy or trade careers:

Swedish, Finnish, German, French, Russian, and English.

We were also invited to join many families for a sauna, since almost every Finnish home had a steam bath and every villa had a special sauna close to one of Finland's many lakes (of which there are 60,000).

At first, I was reluctant to subject myself to the sauna's torturous heat, and so declined the invitations. This distressed Linnea greatly, however, and she tried to persuade me to change my mind by offering to prepare what she said was a "cold" sauna, set at 70 degrees centigrade—or 158 degrees Fahrenheit. (A hot sauna is between 100 and 120 degrees centigrade, or 212 to 248 degrees Fahrenheit!)

I couldn't understand her insistence, but I gave in, and found that I could withstand the heat if I set my mind to it. Nevertheless, I was happy to be able to jump in the cold lake afterward.

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Only later did a much-relieved Linnea explain to me that in Finland it is believed that those who cannot stand the heat of the sauna will never amount to anything. I accepted all offers thereafter, and actually learned to appreciate the experience.

Before I knew it, the summer solstice was upon us. Since June 23 was my father's 84th birthday, I planned a solstice birthday party in his honor, inviting as many relatives as would fit into the parlor.

I went to the village bakery to order a cake, but the lady couldn't understand

me, so she called her son, who had studied English in school. He could only speak a few simple phrases, so I had to resort to my pidgin Swedish.

I clearly pronounced "stor" (big), "kaku" (cake), and "Lucklig Födelsedag, Johannes" (Happy Birthday, John). But before I could finish, the young man had doubled over with laughter at my apparently hilarious inflection. I had to write the words down on the order form to make sure he got it right.

When I told my father about it, he was compelled to tell me that I did speak rather "broken" Swedish. Imagine that! Could it be that my English accent was just as amusing to the Finns as my father's Swedish accent—which he retained even after living in America for 65 years—had always been to me?

There are sounds that Swedish-speaking people cannot make (*th*, *j*, and *w*). When my brother and I were young, we often begged our father to tell us the bear story that he did so well.

He would begin solemnly. "Yust before I vas born, my moder vent valking in de voods, vere she met a bahr. De bahr yumped up and, vit his paws, he yerked my moder out of his vay, den vent off into de voods. My moder vasn't inured, yust scared (pause), but ven I vas born, I vas born vit bahr feet!" (Yust a yoke, of course.)

On the day of the party, the guests arrived with *blommer* (flowers), gifts, and cards. I had prepared a smorgasbord of potato and bean salad, coleslaw, and an array of tiny finger sandwiches made with flat rye bread and spread with butter, tuna, salmon, and other cold cuts. The sandwiches were mostly open-faced, which is the way they preferred them in Vora. When I gave a "closed-faced" sandwich to Rego's little boy Kaj, he took the top off and politely handed it back to me!

It was a happy occasion filled with laughter, song, and endless sunshine. The high point of the day came when all the men rushed to my father, picked him up by his arms and legs, and began tossing him into the air, yelling "Hey!" with each toss.

My father added a little motion by thrashing and turning in mid-air. He looked as though he had done this before, and he had, for it is an old Vora custom that he had enjoyed in his youth.

After everyone left, I got out my camera to snap a photograph of my father holding an alarm clock that showed the time as 12 midnight. I planned to show this to my photographer husband Leo, to prove that there had been enough light in the middle of the night to get a picture, without using flashbulbs!

One week later—although we had not finished our business and I would have to return two more times (but that's another story!)—we bid a fond farewell to our relatives and friends. Then we boarded a Finnair jet bound for home and some cool summer fog. ■



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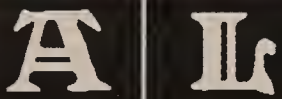
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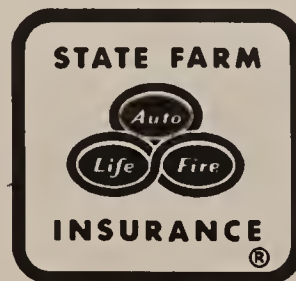
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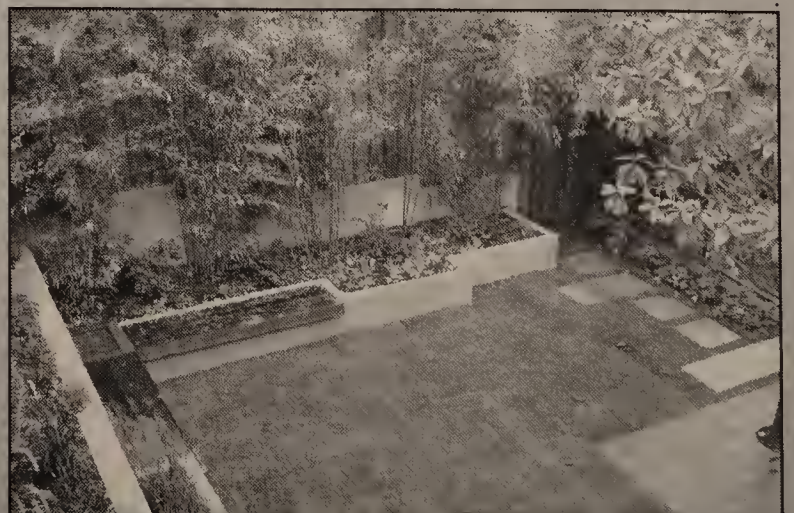
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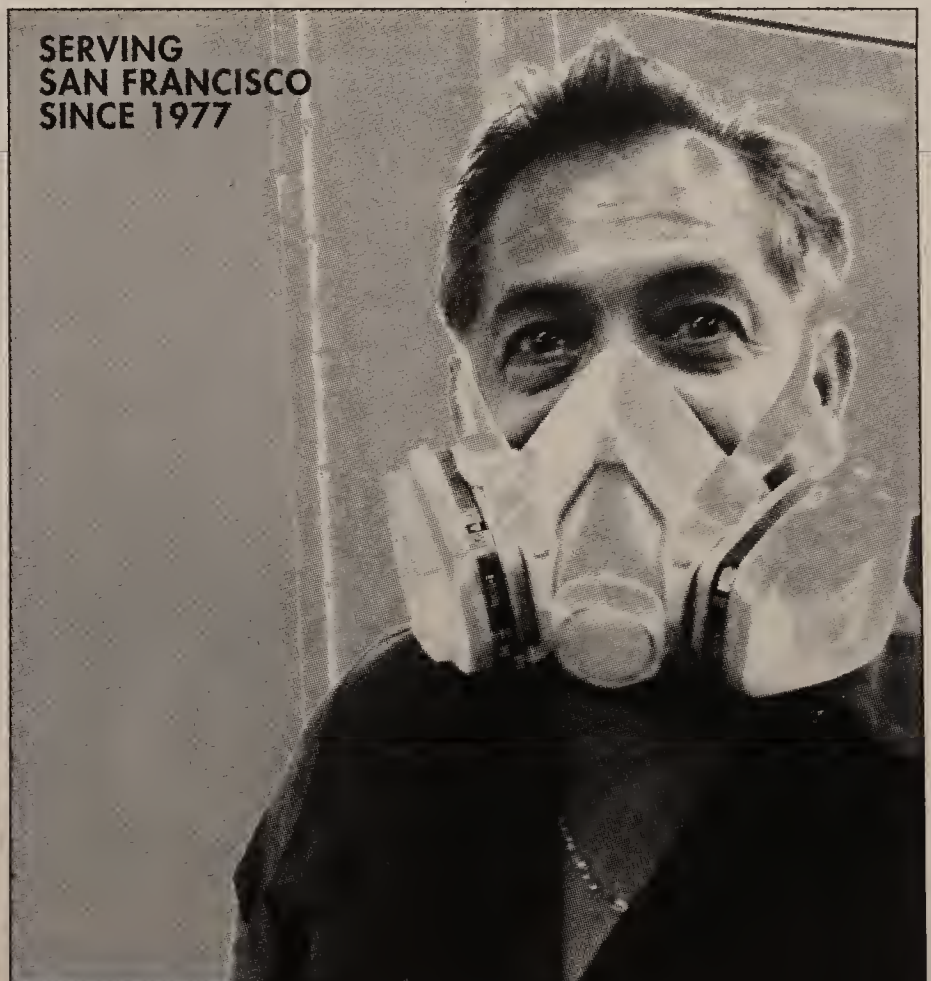
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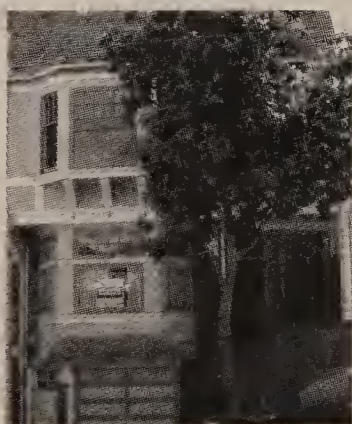
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Kids Report Eureka Learning Center Has 25 Candles

By Alice Amdur,

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Hannah Duane, Harper Corey,
Jackson Moore, Lauren Ainslie,
Liam O'Keefe, Margaret Altman,
Meredith Roberts, Mia Ciccicarrelli,
Miles Raneri, Milla Linkin,
Nate Tessler, Phoebe Frankel, and
Rohini Govier—with Liz Weil

“Were there always spiders?” “Are we going to have cake?”

Sixteen kindergartners at Eureka Learning Center gathered this spring to interview school founder Leslie Banta, in honor of the preschool’s 25th birthday. Everybody sat upstairs at 464 Diamond Street, under a bumpy “popcorn” ceiling (which has been there from the start) and high above the yard (which, much to the children’s amazement, had no deck, no slides, no swings, and no sandbox those many years ago).

Eureka Learning Center has grown up a lot in the past quarter-century. The garden has been tamed from overgrown to inviting. The school program has been pruned into manageable shape as well—from an all-day preschool, an after-school program for school-age kids, and a summer camp, to a far saner schedule of preschoolers and kindergartners only, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Also gone are the days when Banta, along with now kindergarten head teacher Laura Banta (her sister-in-law), worked 24-hour shifts, cleaning and finishing a musty basement at 551 Eureka Street in preparation for the school to open in the fall of 1983.

Over the years, the school has expanded from one site to two. This past fall, Eureka’s first grandchild—the son of Eryn Scott Ramirez, one of the original after-school students—walked through the front door. All in all, more than 700 kids—from Noe Valley and across the city—have enrolled since the program began.

In April, the pint-sized interviewers were taking their job very seriously.

“How did you feel when you started the school?” asked Meredith Roberts, age 5, younger sister of alumna Ellie.

“I remember feeling excited and a little scared, because it was something new and something I really wanted to do, but I wasn’t quite sure how it was going to work out,” Banta explained. “But I felt brave, and I did it, and that was a long time ago.”

In 1972, Banta and her husband, John, had left their home in New York and moved to San Francisco to finish their college education. Before too long, they were getting their degrees (hers in early childhood education, his in journalism) and pooling their talents to raise daughter Jennifer, born in 1973, and son, Eric, who arrived four years later. Leslie taught in the public schools and John operated a



The class of 2008 at Eureka Learning Center is happy that school founder Leslie Banta (top left) decided to continue her amazing 25-year run, offering family daycare in Noe Valley.

Photos courtesy Eureka Learning Center



Eureka Learning Center started out at 551 Eureka Street with 15 preschoolers and seven school-age kids. Shown with the kids in this 1983 photo are Leslie Banta and Tony Perez.

print shop for a while before they scraped together the money to buy the \$150,000 house on Eureka—a bundle at the time. The only way they could afford to follow their dreams—to own a house, watch their kids grow up, and open a preschool—was to do it all in the same building. “Getting a mortgage and getting the school licensed was a trailblazing experience, [because] it was the first program in San Francisco ever to be licensed for large-group family childcare. It was daunting,” recalled Leslie Banta. In the first year, she had 15 preschoolers and seven school-age kids filling the home with running feet.

“Why did you want to make a school?” asked Rohini Govier, also 5, and also the second in her family to attend ELC.

“That’s a good question,” said Banta patiently, sitting in her tiny chair. “It’s not easy! It takes a lot of work and a lot of time, and you have to really want to do this kind of work. And you know what? I did!”

Today, Banta and the eight teachers who work at the center provide tons of fun activities: games, songs, stories, the ABCs, art and science projects, even field trips to places like the Noe Valley Library and the Japanese Tea Garden. They also share memories of Great Moments in ELC History. “We used to hatch eggs every year in an incubator, and we had chicks, ducks, even peacocks at the school,” said Banta. “One year, when we were waiting for the ducks to hatch, they hatched over Easter when the school was closed, so I called

the families who lived close by, and they all came over on Easter Sunday to watch the eggs hatch together. We’re all part of one another’s families here.”

After 20 minutes, the kid interviewers started to squirm, eager to get on with making giant sculptures of bugs.

Still, they managed to eke out a few more questions.

“How old were you when you started the school?”

“I was 32,” said Banta (followed by kid editorializing: “Oh, that’s old!”).

The session closed with one of those questions young children ask that lead them into terrain well beyond their years: “How do you feel to have a school that’s 25 years old?”


Banta sighed and smiled. “I feel very proud to have a school that’s 25 years old. Sometimes I feel a little tired. But overall I feel very, very good. Twenty-five is a big birthday. And it was the same 25 years it took my own kids to grow up and become adults.”

“What has been most fulfilling?” an adult couldn’t help asking.

“The most fulfilling thing has been being able to be a part of the children’s lives over such a long duration of time.... Working with kids when they’re young is a very hopeful enterprise,” Banta said. “To have a front row seat has been very nice.”

Eureka Learning Center would love to hear from alumni and parents. Send your thoughts, wishes, and pictures to content@elcis25.org. Reminiscences will then be posted on ELC’s anniversary website, elcis25.org. Commemorative T-shirts and book bags will be available for purchase through the website as well.



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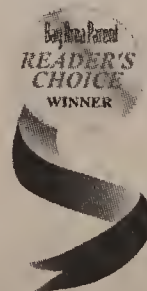
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SCHOOL REPORT

There will be new faces in the principal's office at at least two neighborhood public schools this fall. Here's the news from Fairmount Elementary and James Lick Middle School, reported by stringers Jan Goben and Sue Cattoche.

FAIRMOUNT

Tearful Goodbye at FiestaVal

It was a whirlwind day, with the singing and dancing, the auction, and the butterfly tent that we have come to expect at FiestaVal.

What we weren't prepared for was saying goodbye to Karling. Our beloved principal, Karling Aguilera-Fort, had appeared for the first time in front of our Fairmount family at the FiestaVal of 2003. Back then, he was dressed all in white and bringing his educational expertise, his warmth and laughter, and his discipline to a school that was badly in need of all three after three principals had come and gone in the previous two years.

Now five years later, Karling was telling us it was time to move on, and assuring us he had found someone to fill his shoes.

We knew he was leaving. What we didn't know was that we would all be so choked up at the end of FiestaVal, with parents and teachers taking turns to speak about what he had done for the school, and how he had touched us deep in our hearts. The students, parents, and teachers sat on the steps surrounding the stage, in tears as we realized what we were losing. But just in time, someone turned on the loudspeaker, switched up the volume on the stereo, and blasted the song that Karling sang every Friday afternoon: "I Will Survive!"

Dressed in white just like the first time, Karling danced up a storm, laughing as he wiped away tears, and watched his Fairmount family dance and sing and cry along with him.

Ana Lunardi Comes Home

"But now it's time to move forward," Aguilera-Fort said, stepping aside. "I want you all to meet Ana Lunardi, your new principal!"

As she stepped forward, dressed all in yellow, to rousing cheers, our new principal told the crowd, "I feel like I'm back at home!"

Lunardi taught kindergarten at Fairmount many years ago. That was early on in a career that has taken her to many other classrooms in the San Francisco School District. She has even done a turn as principal at Monroe Elementary School. "Last call for bids!"

The cry went out just as Lunardi had finished talking, and parents headed back to the classrooms where the bid sheets were, some running to make sure they had a chance at their favorite item, some moving slowly, thinking, How much money did I spend today?

But in the end, the chatter was full of excitement as people gathered their goods, counted their blessings, and thanked the merchants, restaurant owners, hair salons, and manicure shops on Church Street, 24th Street, and elsewhere who had donated items for the fair.

In the end, the school took in \$19,000 from auction items alone, and thousands more in tickets, which were used to buy food, play games, enter the butterfly tent, or take a chance on a basket of goodies.



Alvarado Says 'Happy Retirement' To Patty Poli

School Secretary Has Handed Out Band-Aids for 26 Years

By Heather World

She knows each child's name, his teacher, his teacher last year, and his parents' names. She knows how to use the photocopy machine and where the old PTA files are. She knows who added what to the campus and when they added it.

Patty Poli, Alvarado's secretary, is retiring this year after 26 years behind the office desk, and with her departure the Douglass Street elementary school will lose one of its most valuable resources.

Poli's treasure trove of knowledge did not come easily. She recalls an entirely different Alvarado 26 years ago.

"The PTA back then consisted of one parent selling popcorn every day at lunch," she says. The school had one resource specialist and one student adviser trying to serve nearly 500 students, many of whom had special needs. Students had only one recess, with many grades in the yard at once.

"It was just the principal and me," remembers Poli.

Then came the early 1990s, and the school began to change, she says. Vince Matthews, the principal at the time, applied for federal funds to help the special needs children. The money paid for new paraprofessional staff and another secretary. It paid for small but important details like a bell system.

Matthews also introduced staggered recesses and morning circle, and he fostered good relations with the teachers.

"He set the format for so many things we have now," she says.

Each principal since Matthews has improved the school, in Poli's opinion. The teaching staff, too, has always been like family.

"They came early, stayed late, and sometimes came in on weekends," she says.

In Poli's early days, Alvarado competed for students with Rooftop Elementary, another public school with a strong arts program. Through a friendship with Rooftop's secretary, Poli began to see that Alvarado had Rooftop's same assets. Soon, a group of dedicated parents, in-

cluding many from Noe Valley, began to realize that, too.

"They took a chance and made a big difference," she says.

Today Alvarado has two reading-recovery specialists, 13 paraprofessionals, another part-time secretary, and a very active PTA.

None would be surprised to learn that Poli's favorite part of her job has been talking to the 5-year-olds.

"Our kids are so great," she says. She praises the parents for dropping everything to help the school with energy and enthusiasm.

Angela Danison, an Alvarado mom who has been at the school for seven years, says Poli has been a comforting constant in the children's lives.

"She is the one the students go to when they need a Band-Aid or an ice pack," she said. "Some Alvarado graduates come back years later to visit with Patty, to tell her where they are going to middle or high school or what their plans are for college. And she remembers them all!"

After retiring in June, the San Francisco native plans to travel through Europe with her semi-retired husband of 40 years. She has a special interest in Italy,

Second-grader Peter Danison, twin sister Samantha, and first-grader Benjamin Lani (right) get a last hug from school secretary Patty Poli, who will retire June 16 after 26 years at Alvarado. Photo by Pamela Gerard

as she was born to native Italian parents. Growing up, Poli did not speak Italian at home, as her older brother and sister did. Instead, she picked up fluency after marrying her high school sweetheart, whose parents spoke little English. The couple graduated from Polytechnic High across from Kezar Stadium, which has since been torn down.

When she returns home from Europe, Poli will settle into her retirement, cleaning out the corners of her house, where she says various things have accumulated. "I want to dump half the house."

She will also have more time for her children, a son and a daughter in their 30s.

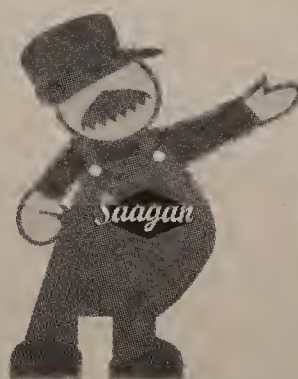
As the next school year starts, Poli expects to volunteer at her granddaughter's school in Marin County.

Well and good, say Alvarado parents and students, but will she visit us?

"Oh, I'll be back to visit—of course!" says Poli.

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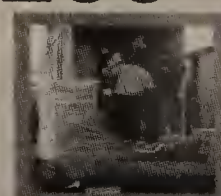
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SCHOOL REPORT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41

a bottle of wine, or a \$750 pair of diamond earrings.

And in the end, Karling Aguilera-Fort will not be too far away, since he has just taken a job as an assistant superintendent for the San Francisco Unified School District. Who knows? Maybe we will see him at FiestaVal again, singing and dancing along with the crowd.

—Jan Goben

JAMES LICK

Principal Takes Top Role at School of the Arts

When our eighth-graders say *adios* to James Lick on June 12, they won't be the only ones moving on to high school in the fall. In late April, Principal Carmelo Sgarlato announced that he will accept a new position as principal of School of the Arts and SOTA Academy, just a short distance up the hill.

Having formerly supervised math, science, and technology curricula for the entire district, Sgarlato found "the opportu-

nity to provide the leadership for a school that can influence the entire district's art curriculum was too important to pass by."

While Sgarlato's departure comes as a surprise to the admiring and appreciative families he has served, the school's curriculum, climate, and academic ranking have improved dramatically during his three years of exceptional leadership. Fortunately for the school, Assistant Principal Bitá Nazarian, who has been at his side from the start, will succeed him as principal.

Over the past three years, Sgarlato and Nazarian have collaborated to bring enormous improvements to James Lick. Student academic achievement and standardized test scores have made great gains, and a rich and stimulating arts curriculum has emerged. Changes in scheduling have reduced class size and provided teachers at each grade level with shared planning time, enabling them to integrate the curriculum across subject areas and share their collective knowledge and ideas. Nazarian is well prepared to maintain and deepen these improvements, while continuing to emphasize the development of literacy and writing skills across all areas of the curriculum.

Nazarian's successor as assistant principal will be Marilyn Koral, who has served in that position at academically flourishing Lawton Alternative Elementary School (grades K-8) for the past two years. Prior to that, Koral prepared low-

income students for success in high school through the Aim High program and taught art at nearby Everett Middle School, working alongside Nazarian—who reports that she is "very excited to have her on our team."

Congratulations to Our Winners!

James Lick is proud to announce three literary arts winners in this year's Young at Art Festival. Competing with middle school students from all the city's public, private, and charter schools, eighth-grader Rosa Morales brought home the gold for her short story; seventh-grader Bayron Rodriguez won the bronze in the expository/journalistic writing category; and James Fotherby, another eighth-grader, earned an honorable mention for his poetry. They received their awards and read their winning works at the festival's Literary Arts event at the de Young Museum on May 24.

Students in Sarah Jones' eighth-grade Peer Resources group recently won an award for the "Best Workshop," at a middle school conference on sexual harassment. Congratulations to the kids, and best wishes to Ms. Jones!

Young Writers' Camp Returns

The Bay Area Writing Project returns to James Lick this summer with three weeks of challenges for students who love writing. Classes are designed for students entering grades 4 through 8 in the

SCHOOL CONTACTS

James Lick Middle School
Carmelo Sgarlato, Principal
1220 Noe Street at 25th Street
415-695-5675
www.jameslickptsa.org

Fairmount Elementary School
Karling Aguilera-Fort, Principal
65 Chenery Street at Randall
415-695-5669
www.fairmountschoolpta.org

Alvarado Elementary School
Robert Broecker, Principal
625 Douglass Street at Alvarado
415-695-5695
www.alvaradoschool.net

fall, and run Monday through Friday from June 23 through July 11, from 9 a.m. to noon. The camps provide in-depth writing instruction, structured writing workshop time, flexibility in writing assignments, and daily opportunities to share writing with peers. Students will also edit and publish their own writing; use literature and poetry as models; explore a variety of ways to celebrate writing; and have fun and make new friends! Details and registration forms are posted at www.bayareawritingproject.org. Scholarships are available.

Spanish-Immersion Program Wins 'Calle' Credibility

When Lisa Jolicoeur was traveling with her children in Cozumel, Mexico, during spring break, she received constant compliments on how fluently and eloquently her children spoke Spanish. And when the kids, who have been in the Spanish-immersion programs at Fairmount and James Lick, knew the traditional dances well enough to join the weekend festivities in the town plaza, the local residents could not believe that they did not live year-round in a city in Mexico!

—Sue Cattoche



Way to Go, Sluggers! The fearless Bruins, St. Philip School's third-grade baseball stars, are awash in trophies after beating a heavily favored St. Cecilia team in playoffs sponsored by the San Francisco Parish & School Baseball League. The divisional champions were coached by Mike Cassidy and J. R. Hubbard (of Selecta Auto Body on 24th Street).

Photo courtesy Rick Carell



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MORE BOOKS TO READ

You can read about a pig who is a neatfreak and a girl who gets stranded on an island with some bullies from her school, in two of the books on this month's list, offered by Voice staffer Karol Barske and Carol Small, children's librarian at the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library at 451 Jersey Street. To see if the books are available, drop by the branch, go to www.sfpl.org, or call Small or branch manager Alice McCloud at 355-5707.

Adult Nonfiction

■ In *Fool's Gold: Why the Internet Is No Substitute for a Library*, Mark Herring makes a case for careful, in-depth research, in chapters titled "Forget the Needle: Can You Just Tell Me Which Haystack?" and "Google Uber Alles."

■ Learn five karate moves, how to whistle with two fingers, and how to tie a sari in *The Daring Book for Girls*, by Andrea Buchanan and Miriam Peskowitz.

■ After being diagnosed with terminal cancer, professor and computer scientist Randy Pausch wrote *The Last Lecture*, his take on the things that matter most in life.

■ Germaine Greer reinterprets the historical evidence about the late-16th-century life of Anne Hathaway, in *Shakespeare's Wife*.

Adult Fiction

■ A graduate student has a breakdown when an acquaintance seemingly appropriates his memories in *The Soul Thief* by Charles Baxter.

■ The life of a high-powered New York real estate executive is torn apart when he gets involved with a Russian company, in *The Deal* by Adam Gittlin.

■ Pearlle Cook narrates *The Story of a Marriage* that began in San Francisco in 1953, in a novel by Andrew Sean Greer, author of *The Confessions of Max Tivoli*.

■ *Tyrants*, by Marshall Klimasewski, is a collection of stories about dictators, aeronauts, and WASP families in the throes of domestic battles.

Children's Books

■ When the other pigs jeer at Hamlet for being tidy and smart, he reads poems to the "twin" he sees reflected in a pond, in *Will You Read to Me?* by author and illustrator Denys Cazet. *Ages 3 to 6.*

■ The world is a magical place where stars fly down to Earth to sit in cafes, and trees wear hats and drink tea, in *Lily Brown's Paintings* by Angela Johnson. *Ages 3 to 6.*

■ *Dolores Meets Her Match* when she tries to make her nap-loving cat Duncan compete with a prize-winning Siamese show cat, in a furl tale by Barbara Samuels. *Ages 3 to 6.*

■ First-grader Jake sometimes annoys his older sister Abigail, in the stories found in Judy Blume's *Soupy Saturdays with the Pain and the Great One*. *Ages 6 to 8.*

■ After she's tossed in a dumpster and carried out to sea with a gang of rowdies from her school, 9-year-old Roxie takes charge and turns foes to friends, in *Roxie and the Hooligans* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. *Ages 6 to 8.*

■ Agnes Parker survives gym insecurities, an over-achieving best friend, and a boy with a crush, all during her first year at Horace Mann, in *Keeping Cool in Middle School* by Kathleen O'Dell. *Ages 9 and up.*

■ In Dan Gutman's picture book *Casey Back at Bat*—a spinoff of the famous baseball poem—Casey hits a fly ball that takes a trip around the world. *All ages.*

LIBRARY EVENTS

Get Crafty: Matchbox Books

■ C.J. Grossman from the San Francisco Center for the Book shows how to make a *matchbox* with a small book inside, on Wednesday, June 11, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Enrollment is limited to 15 (ages 16 and up); call 355-5707 to sign up.

A Visit from Magic Dan

■ *Magic Dan* tells jokes and does magic tricks, for kids of all ages, on Saturday, June 21, 11 to 11:45 a.m.

"It's Yoga, Kids!"

■ Bring a towel or mat for your child to sit on at a *Yoga! Yoga!* class for kids 5 and younger, on Tuesday, June 24, 10:15 a.m. The class, presented by It's Yoga, Kids, will be repeated at 11 a.m.

Boswick the Clown

■ *Boswick the Clown*, who was once with Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus, performs magic and juggling comedy on Saturday, June 28, 11 to 11:45 a.m.

Lapsits for Infants and Toddlers

■ You and your baby or toddler will enjoy stories, songs, and fingerplays at the *lapsits* held Tuesdays, June 3 and June 10, 10:15 to 10:45 a.m.

Preschool Story Time

■ Children 3 to 5 are invited for *preschool story time*, a read-aloud program from 11 to 11:30 a.m. on June 3, June 10, and July 1.

Movies for Kids

■ The library shows *films* for preschoolers on Tuesday, June 17, 10:15 to 11 a.m.

All events are held at the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library at 451 Jersey Street near Castro Street. For information, call 355-5707.

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Eureka Valley-Harvey Milk Branch Library

1 José Sarria Ct. (3555 16th St.), 355-5616

(Closed for renovation)

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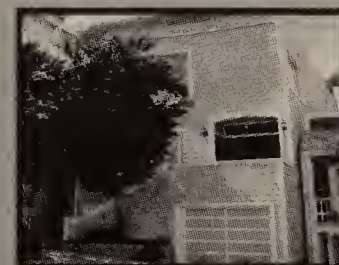
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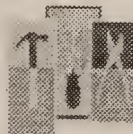
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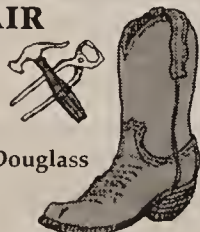
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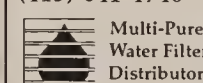
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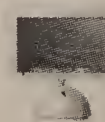
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10 for 10 discount: The *Noe Valley Voice* publishes 10 months a year. (We're on vacation in January and August.) If you place the *same* class ad in 10 issues, you are entitled to a 10 percent discount. To figure your cost, deduct 10 percent from the total amount due for 10 issues.

The next *Voice* will be the July / August 2008 issue, distributed in Noe Valley the first week of July. **The deadline for Class Ads is June 15.** Note: This issue's Class Ads will be displayed for two months on our website: www.noevalleyvoice.com.

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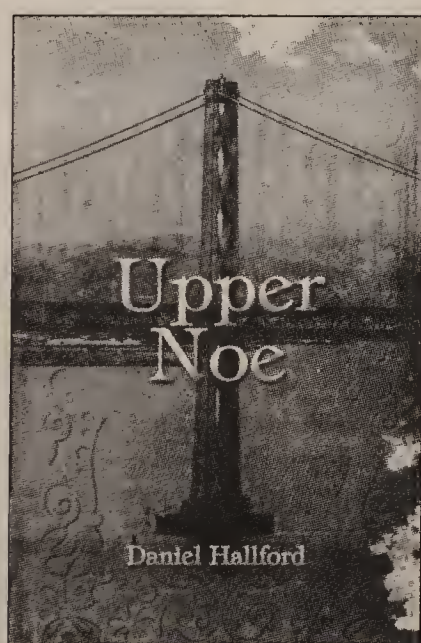
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10 for 10 discount: The *Noe Valley Voice* publishes 10 months a year. (We're on vacation in January and August.) If you place the *same* class ad in 10 issues, you are entitled to a 10 percent discount. To figure your cost, deduct 10 percent from the total amount due for 10 issues.

The next *Voice* will be the July/August 2008 issue, distributed in Noe Valley the first week of July. **The deadline for Class Ads is June 15.** Note: This issue's Class Ads will be displayed for two months on our website: www.noevalleyvoice.com.

Class advertisers should keep in mind that only the first few words of the ad (not to exceed one line of type) will be set in bold. Also, receipts and tear sheets will be provided only if your order is accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Thank you for your support.

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1409 Sanchez Street

701 Minnesota #206
4831 17th Street
144 Valley Street

2008 Sales

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714 Duncan Street
166 Duncan Street
281 Richland Avenue
2184 15th Street
2186 15th Street
2186A 15th Street

156 Arbor Street
2022 34th Avenue
255 Duncan Street
414 Liberty Street
2347 Union Street #4
1870 Church Street
3785 21st Street

912 Castro Street
360 Eureka Street
4385 25th Street
790 Sanchez Street #1
790 Sanchez Street #2
790 Sanchez Street #3
282 Eureka Street

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and now for the RUMORS behind the news

\$5,000 Per Second

By Mazook

WHAT PRICE GLORY? The Noe Valley Bureau of Investigation issued a "Red Alert" after confirming with our representative in Congress, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, that the federal government is now spending \$5,000 per second occupying Iraq and fighting the war in Afghanistan. "It's about \$3,500 to \$4,000 a second for Iraq, and the balance for the Afghan fighting," say sources in Pelosi's Washington office.

The NVBI is calling for a neighborhood mobilization to urge each and every Noe Valleyan to register and vote this fall. Turnouts of less than 50 percent (read the June 3 primary election) are just plain unacceptable for this enlightened neighborhood. "We all have to become involved in some way, and voting is the easiest way," declared the NVBI. "That way, Noe Valley can send a message to Washington and inspire the voters across America to vote their consciences this November."

☎ ☎ ☎

NOE GLOBAL VALLEYANS: Medea Benjamin and her husband, Kevin Danaher, have been doing more than voting in the 24 years they've lived in Noe Valley, at Sanchez and Valley streets. They founded 24th Street's Global Exchange, the fair trade crafts store, with Kirsten Irkens-Moller in 1988.

The shop started out in a tiny garage next to St. Clair's Liquors at 24th and Sanchez, and then moved up the street to its present location near Noe in 1998.

Benjamin, who ran for the U.S. Senate as the Green Party candidate in 2000, also founded Code Pink: Women for Peace, in 2003. She describes it as a "grassroots peace and social justice movement working to end the war in Iraq and redirect our resources into health care, education, and other life-affirming activities."

You have probably seen Benjamin on the evening news, leading rather vocal protests. Last year, she spearheaded a rally against the war at Nancy Pelosi's San Francisco home, and she has been removed from the U.S. House of Representatives during a number of votes on war funding.

Several months ago, Benjamin demonstrated in Berkeley to get the military recruiters out of town, and most recently Code Pink mounted a national effort on Memorial Day, "doing banner drops [hanging banners across freeway overpasses] calling for the impeachment of Bush and the end to the war," she says. Benjamin unfurled a banner from the Webster Street overpass at Geary that morning and then moved operations over to Berkeley's University Street overpass on I-80 in the afternoon.

A few days later, Benjamin left for the Middle East, and she's now in Syria and Jordan "dealing with the plight of the refugees." She says she'll return by the end of the month, when she will go on trial in Berkeley for her protests against the recruiting office on Shattuck Avenue.

Meanwhile, Danaher, who has been described by the *New York Times* as "the Paul Revere of globalization's woes," has been organizing his Green Festivals, which he started here in San Francisco eight years ago and now stages in Washington, D.C., Chicago, Seattle, and Denver. The Green Festival at Moscone Center last November drew a crowd of 41,000. Danaher, who has a Ph.D. in sociology, has also been writing and editing numerous books and articles. His latest (which he co-authored) is *Building the Green Economy: Success Stories from the Grass Roots*. It includes one of his more

popular speeches, "Corporations Are Gonna Get Your Mama: Globalization and the Downsizing of the American Dream."

"I just returned from Florence, Italy, where I attended and spoke at Terra Futuro, which is a European Green Festival," reports Danaher, "and I will be participating in the Health and Harmony Festival in Santa Rosa [at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds] starting June 17, where we expect somewhere between 30,000 and 40,000 to attend."

The next Green Festival in San Francisco, says Danaher, is scheduled for Nov. 14 to 16, at the San Francisco Concourse Exhibition Center. There will be more than 400 "green economy" exhibits, 12 organic restaurants, and 150 speakers.

By the way, at \$5,000 per second, the Green Festival's total budget runs about the same as a minute and 40 seconds of war.

☎ ☎ ☎

NOTED IN NOE: Other Noe Valley newsmakers include Ben Fong-Torres, who won an Emmy last month from the Northern California Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, for his work on the telecast of the 2007 S.F. Chinese New Year Parade on KTVU Channel 2.

Fong-Torres, as many of you know, was a writer and senior editor of *Rolling Stone* magazine and the *Chronicle's* "Radio Waves" columnist. He has authored several books, was once a deejay at the old KSAN radio station, and currently has an oldies rock-and-roll radio show on Sunday mornings and evenings at KFRC-FM 106.9.

He says he is finishing a biography of music legend Quincy Jones, which should be released "sometime next year."

Another author making a big splash is Daphne Miller, M.D., who with Dr. Avril Swan operates a family practice on Sanchez Street. In late April, Miller published a book called *The Jungle Effect*, which is about the healthy diets she's discovered on her world travels. Since then, Miller has gotten attention from a ton of

broadcast and print media, and won raves from people like alternative health guru Andrew Weil and Andrew Pollen, who wrote *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. The *Voice* hopes to interview her soon.

Kudos also go out to longtime Noe Valleyan Judge Donna Hitchens, recently named by our State Assembly representative Mark Leno as "Woman of the Year" for 2008 in our 13th Assembly District. Many of you remember participating in the grassroots movement in Noe Valley when Hitchens decided to run for, and then was elected to, the San Francisco Superior Court bench in 1990.

Says Leno, "Judge Hitchens is one of those extraordinary individuals we rarely come across in our lifetimes. She has put her time and talents to use for those that need them most: foster youth, young people exposed to violence, and low-income families, working tirelessly [as presiding judge of Unified Family Court] to improve the accessibility of the legal system for low-income families and children."

That legal access program, by the way, costs less than a minute of war.

☎ ☎ ☎

BIG SMALL BUSINESSES: The Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association celebrated "Small Business Week" at Cooks Boulevard on the evening of Wednesday, May 14. Honored for longevity in our neighborhood were Elisa Ining of Elisa's Health Spa, on 24th Street for 40+ years; Joel Panzer's RMC Management, at the same location for 28 years; Isa (Muhawieh's) Salon, in Downtown Noe Valley for 26 years; and Robert Roddick, past president of the NVMPA and a Noe Valley lawyer for the past 30 years. The NVMPA also gave special recognition to our recently returned Noe Valley beat cop, San Francisco Police Officer Lorraine Lombardo.

Everyone is rooting for Yvette Chamberland to be able to extend the longevity of her jewelry store, Rose Quartz.

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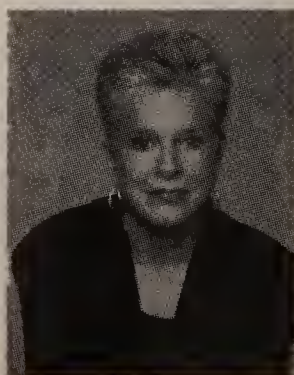
Local Roots Run Deep



A resident of Noe Valley for 15 years, Jane Ivory is intimately familiar with the rich abundance of culture that makes this neighborhood such a fertile community.

Whether browsing at the Animal Company, lunching at Le Zinc, or window shopping among the many boutiques, Jane's local knowledge comes from the experience of living among the treasures that give this neighborhood its unique atmosphere.

So whether you want to plant your roots or transfer to another ground, let Jane point you to the best spot in this garden.



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RUMORS

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

which has been located on 24th Street near Sanchez since 1986. The store had a large banner out front last month, saying, "We Lost Our Lease." We hope she can find a new spot in Noe Valley.

You all might remember back when the business first moved into half of that garage next to St. Clair's. Chamberland tented the walls and ceiling with white linens. Next door was Global Exchange's first store (where Bay Castle Cleaners is now). The owner remodeled the garage a little over eight years ago, finally turning it into a store with four walls, a ceiling, and front window.

Also losing its lease was the antique store The Pickled Hutch, after eight years of operation on Church Street near Duncan. Owner Lisa Wilson has relocated the shop to Pacifica (2021 Palmetto Avenue). Wilson blogs that the building was sold "about a year and a half ago, and the new landlord put us on a month to month without a [new] lease."

Mary and Michael Gassen, who have operated a thriving Noe Valley Bakery for the past 13 years, are now opening a new business in our sister valley in Marin County, Mill Valley. Rather than breads, cakes, and cookies, the new store, called Lollipop, will sell homemade ice cream, candy, and cupcakes.

While their cupcakes are a hot item here, I'm hoping they will add a freezer to the local bakery and put some of that Mill Valley homemade ice cream on our shelves.

☎ ☎ ☎

PARK LARKS & BARKS: The Friends of Dolores Park Playground will be hosting a puppet show at the park on Saturday, June 14. "Tales from the Enchanted Forest" will feature the Nick Barone Pup-

pets (his musical puppet theater has more than 20 puppet characters) and will start at 11 a.m. for a one-hour performance with refreshments served afterwards. The free event is being sponsored by Bi-Rite Market.

The Friends, which is working in partnership with the Neighborhood Parks Council, recently announced a \$1.5 million grant from the San Francisco-based Mercer Fund (in honor of Helen Diller), for the renovation of Dolores Park playground.

If you want to help with the plans, the group is always looking for volunteers. Please contact them at www.friendsofdolorespark.org.

For those of you wondering when our own Upper Noe Rec Center will reopen after its \$12.5 million renovation, we wish we could tell you. Rec and Park has yet to set a date, but the latest rumor is sometime in mid-August. Anyone who has walked by the park recently would have to wonder if that's too optimistic. The *Voice* has made several calls to Rec and Park but at press time had received no reply.

Noe Courts Park, at 24th and Douglass, has had some "unpleasantness" of late, caused by friction between the dog owners and kids and parents who share the small patch of green. Be aware: the leash law is being strictly enforced (see Letters, page 9).

And for all you folks up on Grand View, who were looking forward to cleaning up the large grassy area below the Upper Market Street trestle, word has come down from Friends of Noe Valley president Richard May that the \$200,000 that was budgeted by the city last year has been cut from the budget this year.

That would be about 40 seconds.

☎ ☎ ☎

SHINE ON, HARVEST FEST: The fourth annual Noe Valley Harvest Festival is now slated for Saturday, Oct. 25, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The 24th Street fair is sponsored by the Noe Valley Association, and

several other neighborhood groups, and this year it's being organized by Kathy White.

All kids age 18 and under can again enter the Harvest Festival logo contest, and a call is out for volunteers to help staff the event. According to White, "in order to continue this fun-filled day for all ages, volunteer opportunities abound for both the planning stages right now and on the day of the festival."

If you would like to be part of the fair, contact White at nvlf@yahoo.com.

☎ ☎ ☎

LOST IN THE FOG, late racehorse extraordinaire, and his owner, Harry Aleo of Twin Peaks Properties at 24th and Castro, have been immortalized in a documentary film. *Lost in the Fog*, the movie, will have its "unofficial" world premiere on June 10 at the Kabuki Theater in San Francisco and then its "official" world premiere in Las Vegas on June 14, at the Palms Theater.

The film was produced by native Noe Valleyan John Corey, and tells the story of how a world-class racehorse thrust a Noe Valley realtor into the world spotlight. Fog was the world's fastest sprinter in 2005, and died from a rare form of cancer the following year.

It is also a story of how producer Corey, who was a producer at KPIX-TV, went to do a three-minute story about Harry and his horse and wound up quitting his TV job and following the Fog fulltime all over the country. He shot the documentary as the story unfolded.

Corey says he would like to have a special showing of the film in Noe Valley and that it should open at a theater in San Francisco sometime this fall.

Hopefully, Aleo will be able to attend the gala opening party on June 10, but the 88-year-old has been feeling "a little under the weather these days."

☎ ☎ ☎

THAT ALL, YOU ALL: Ciao for now. ■

Julia Ready to Receive an Award

She Thinks 2-Year-Olds Are Terrific

By Olivia Boler

Childcare providers are often unsung heroes, but recently, Noe Valley's own Julia Ready received some props for her good work. Ready was among nine childcare providers honored at the Sacramento State Capitol at the fourth annual Childcare Provider of the Year ceremony in April. Ready runs Growing Up, a family childcare home in Noe Valley, and she's licensed to watch up to six children.

Before going into this line of work, she was the manager at Star Magic, a popular shop on 24th Street. The birth of her son Julian in 1989 sparked her interest in child development. Growing Up is a year-long program for 2-year-olds, and Ready's goal is to help them transition into preschool. She says caring for a child during his toddler years is engaging and challenging, but mostly very rewarding. Ready also mentors youth and future care providers.

At the ceremony in Sacramento, public broadcasting stations KVIE (Sacramento) and KCET (Los Angeles), as well as members of the state legislature, recognized Ready for her commitment to providing quality childcare. She was also lauded for the role she plays in raising preschool-age children, as well as preparing them for kindergarten. Ready also has been featured as a Childcare Provider of the Week on the award-winning PBS talk-show series *A Place of Our Own* and its Spanish-language counterpart, *Los Niños en Su Casa*. "Working with two-year-olds is a great passion for me," Ready says. "Some people call it the terrible two's, but I like to call it terrific two's." ■



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E-mail: capa@home4us.org

Meetings: Second Thursday of the month, Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Church Street Professionals

Contacts: Lynn Ingham, 643-5966, or Paula Benton, 248-0235

E-mail: bentonp@sprynet.com

Meetings: Third Monday, every other month. Location varies.

Diamond Heights Community Association

Contact: Betsy Eddy, 239-5776

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31529, San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: First Thursday of the month, 7:30 p.m. Call for location.

Dolores Heights Improvement ClubE-mail: dhic123@gmail.comWebsite: www.doloresheights.org

Meetings: Board meetings bimonthly; membership semi-annually.

Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)

Contacts: Pat Lockhart, 282-9360;

Diane McCarney, 824-0303; or

Deanna Mooney, 821-4045

Mailing Address: 560 Duncan St., San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: Call for details.

East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club

Contact: Paul Kantus, 647-3753

Mailing Address: 492 Douglass St., San Francisco, CA 94114

Meetings: Irregular, call to confirm.

Eureka Valley Promotion Association

Contact: Lion Barnett, 255-3624

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14137, San Francisco, CA 94114

Meetings: Third Thursday of the month (except December), Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Fair Oaks Neighbors

Contact: Joyce Kurtz, 401-6362

Mailing Address: 261 Fair Oaks St., San Francisco, CA 94110

Note: The annual Fair Oaks Street Fair is held the day before Mother's Day.

MORE GROUPS TO JOIN

Fairmount Heights Neighborhood Association

Contact: Gregg Brooks

E-mail: sflyric@yahoo.com

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31059, San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: E-mail for details.

Friends of Dolores Park Playground

Contact: Eli Merritt, 285-3774

E-mail: emerr@earthlink.net

Mailing Address: 3786 20th St., San Francisco, CA 94110

Meetings: E-mail for information.

Friends of Glen Canyon Park

Contact: Richard Craib, 648-0862

Mailing Address: 140 Turquoise Way, San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: Call for details.

Friends of Noe Courts Playground

Contact: Laura Norman

E-mail: lauranor@yahoo.com

Mailing Address: c/o Friends of Noe Valley, P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146

Meetings: E-mail for dates and times.

Friends of Noe Valley (FNV)

Contact: Richard May

E-mail: rambooks@pacbell.netWebsite: www.friendsofnoevalley.com

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146

Meetings: First or second Thursday of the month (call or e-mail to confirm), at St. Philip's Parish Hall, 725 Diamond St.

Friends of On Lok's 30th Street Senior Center

Contact: Marianne Hampton, 601-7845

Mailing Address: 225 30th St., San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: Occasional. Call for details.

Friends of Noe Valley Recreation Center and Park

Contact: Alexandra Torre

E-mail: noe_park@atorre.comWebsite: www.noevalleyrecenter.com

Meetings: E-mail or check website.

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association

Contact: John Barbey, 695-0990

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 192114, San Francisco, CA 94119

Meetings: Quarterly. Call for details.

Noe Screenwriting Discussion Group

Contact: Kendall Callas, 821-1310

E-mail: kendall@microcounsel.com

Meetings: Monthly; e-mail for details.

Pre-requisite: Completed a screenplay or a screenwriting course.

Noe Strolls "Playgroup on Wheels"Contact: noestrolls@aol.com

Weekly Stroll: Thursday at 11 a.m., departing Holey Bagel, 3872 24th St.

For details, visit www.noestrolls.com.**Noe Valley Association—24th Street Community Benefit District**Contact: Debra Niemann, nemo@rcn.com

Dispatch: To report spills, debris, or garbage on 24th Street, call 559-8492.

Noe Valley Democratic Club

Contact: Andy Fleischman, 641-5838

Meetings: Third Wednesday of the month; Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St., 7:30 p.m.

Noe Valley Farmers' Market

Saturdays, 8 a.m. to noon, on 24th between Sanchez and Vicksburg Street

Contact: Paula Benton, 248-1332

Mailing Address: 4104 24th St., #401, San Francisco, CA 94114

Meetings: Second Thursday of the month, Noe Valley Ministry (co-sponsor), 1021 Sanchez St., 8 p.m.

Noe Valley Library Campaign

Contacts: Kim Drew, 643-4695,

kkdrew@yahoo.com; Marian Chatfield-Taylor, 626-7512, ext. 103

Mailing Address: Friends of the San Francisco Public Library, 391 Grove St., San Francisco, CA 94102

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association (NVMPA)

Contacts: Donna Davis, 647-2116, or Gwen Sanderson, 550-7577

E-mail: info@noevalleymerchants.com; register at www.noevalleymerchants.com. Meetings: Last Wednesday of the month. E-mail for location and time.**Noe Valley Parent Network**

An e-mail resource network for parents

Contact: Mina Kenvin

E-mail: minaken@gmail.com**Noe Valley Preparedness Committee**

Contact: Maxine Fasulis, 641-5536

E-mail: mfasulis@yahoo.com

Meetings: Call for details.

Outer Noe Valley Merchants

Contact: Jim Appenrodt, 641-1500

Mailing Address: 294 29th St., San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: Call for details.

San Jose/Guerrero Coalition to Save Our Streets

Contact: Don Oshiro, 285-8188

E-mail: contact@sanjoseguerrero.comWebsite: www.sanjoseguerrero.com

Meetings: See website.

See Jane Run Running Programs

Contacts: Shauna Nyborg, 415-401-8338;

Deb DeFanti, 415-839-9393

E-mail: events@seejanerun.com

Address: 3910 24th Street (at Sanchez)

Website: <http://www.seejanerun.com/t-Training.aspx>**Southwest Mission Neighborhood Association (SWMNA)**

Boundaries: 24th Street to Cesar Chavez and Fair Oaks to Mission

Contact: Lori Oshiro, Secretary

E-mail: lori@tail-wagging.comWebsite: www.tail-wagging.com

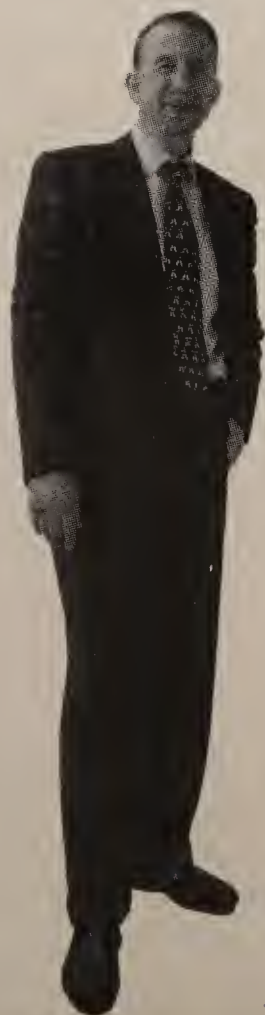
Meetings: E-mail for information.

Upper Noe Neighbors

Contact: Vicki Rosen, 285-0473

Mailing Address: 169 Valley St., San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: Last Thursday of the month (call to confirm), 30th Street Senior Center, 225 30th St., 7:30 p.m.



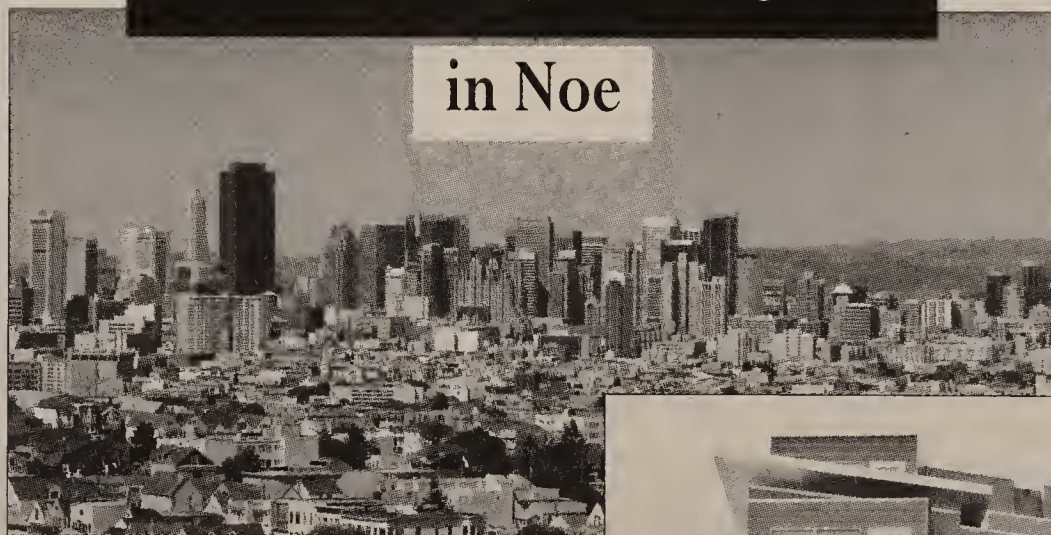
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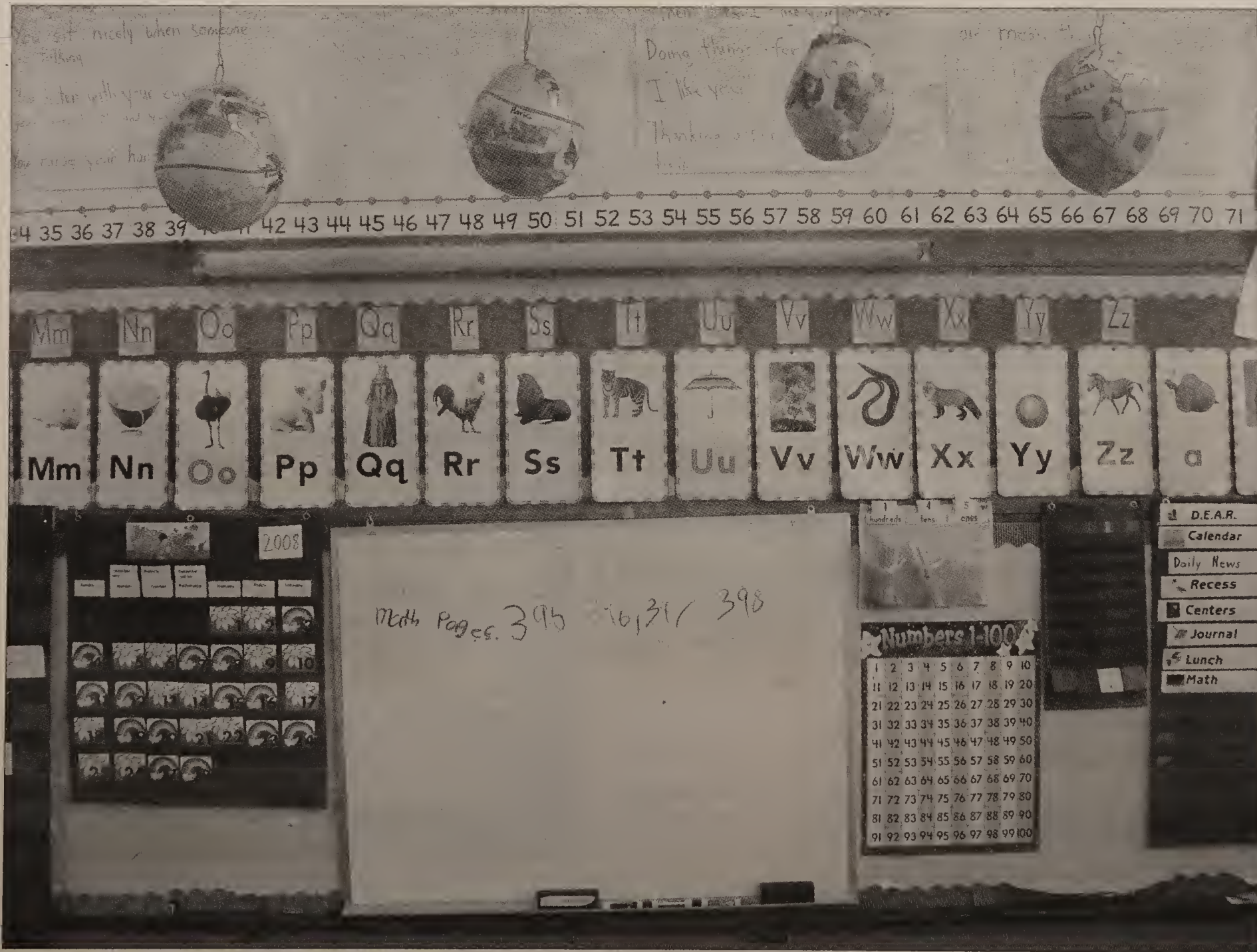


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School's Out. And a quiet hallway at Alvarado Middle School is watched over by a cluster of planet earths. See you in September.

Photo by Pamela Gerard



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SAN FRANCISCO MARIN PENINSULA

My Chemical Romance

◆ By Owen Baker-Flynn ◆

In April, my teenage daughter went to her first rock concert ever, which meant I went to my first rock concert in quite some time.

I was painting a bench on a sunny day in February when my 16-year-old daughter, Sara, came down the back stairs and said, "Can I ask you a question?" Naturally, with that kind of setup, I had to quip: "You already did." She looked at me like I was an alien from another planet—a look I get a lot. Then she asked, "Can I go to a concert?"

Normally, this is the sort of question reserved for Mom, but I guess I was the perceived softer touch this time. I asked who and where. Sara said she wanted to see My Chemical Romance, coming to the Warfield April 4.



I thought for a while as I painted my bench. My first rock concert was back in 1970—something in Rhode Island. I was 15 or 16, and working at an Italian restaurant. I remember, it wasn't my night to work, so I must have gone to the restaurant to pick up my check. When I got there, a bunch of guys asked if I wanted to go see Deep Purple. I called my mom and she said yes.

Clearly, I couldn't pull the "When I was your age, we didn't..." out of the Parents Handbook (which I believe is still available on Amazon). So I thought some more, took a deep breath, and said, "Okayyyy, but you have to go with at least two friends—you can't go by yourself. And you still have to ask your mom."

Later, she and her mom came back to me with one more revision: One of the kids' parents also had to go.

None of us was dying to see My Chemical Romance. They scream, they play loud (the band, not the parents!). People call them punk, glam, and "emo"—whatever that means. But I like music of all kinds, and even though I'm probably not the "coolest" parent, I was the one elected to go. Actually, elected isn't the right word.

Someone yelled, "Last one out of the room has to go the concert!"

The big night finally arrived. My daughter was dressed in what I'd call "goth-lite." Lots of black. Lots of dark eye shadow. No piercings, no overcoats, no stomping boots.



By the time we got to the Warfield, an hour and a half before the show, the line snaked from the door of the theater all the way down Market Street around the corner and up Turk Street and back toward Taylor. It was packed with people, big and small, dressed just like my daughter.

When we got inside the hall, I tried to stand close to Sara and her friends. But at some point it became clear that my presence was not welcome. I was cool with that. I'm a dad, after all. So I stood back a few yards and kept an eye on them.

The opening act was a band called Drive By. I can't say I loved it or hated it, but it was interesting. Music is inherently interesting. I found myself wondering, how did they put those drum and bass sounds together? How does one guy know when the other guy is going to start or stop?



Then Billy Talent came on as the middle act. There didn't seem to be much difference between Billy Talent and Drive By, so I started thinking: How does one become a headliner? Do openers become middles? Do middles eventually graduate to headliner? Then My Chemical Romance came on, and midway through the first song I thought, Oh, *that's* how you become a headliner. My Chemical Romance was clearly better at whatever this music was.

By now, though, I was getting antsy. It was nearly 10 o'clock, and

with MCR just starting I knew we weren't leaving anytime soon. I went to the lobby to check out the rock-and-roll posters.

Then something odd happened. I was standing on the center staircase in the lobby, looking at a marble pedestal with a pastel rainbow vase filled with flowers, when an older woman—well, older than most of the concert-goers—came up to me and said, "You have to turn the flowers."

"Huh?"

"You turn the flower vase." Then she leaned in and whispered, "You're here for the Parents Club, right?"

She had a funny conspiratorial look in her eyes, almost like she was egging me on. So I said, "Yeah."

"Then turn the flower vase one quarter turn clockwise," she whispered again.

I did.



Suddenly, the curved wall spun around me, and I was in what seemed like a circular elevator car. There were two buttons. One said *Lobby*, and the other *P.C.* I pushed *P.C.* and was whooshed upwards to what I now know is the eighth floor of the Warfield Theatre. The door opened and I stepped out.

The room was lit softly. There were tables filled with hors d'oeuvres and canapés and what looked like those little quiches. A clean-cut man in a tight white T-shirt, with blond hair, a mustache, and pecs and lats that went forever, came over and said, "Are you here for a back rub or a hot tub?"

"What is this?" I asked.

"It's the Parents Club. Welcome."

"I'm a little confused."

"Is this your first visit with us?"

"Yeah, it is. Umm, what's going on?" I was getting a little nervous.

"Relax, sir. My name is Jason. The Parents Club is a place set up for the parents of our younger concert-goers. We provide appetizers, spa services, TV, movies...you know, whatever we

think parents might like. What would you like?"

"Hmm," I bit my lower lip and reached for my wallet.

But Jason waved me off. "Don't worry, it's all paid for. Everything's included in the price of the concert ticket."

"Wha...how?" I frowned.

"Ticketmaster!" said Jason, smiling broadly. "You didn't think all those extra fees went into Ticketmaster's pockets, did you?"

"Now, would you like shiatsu or Swedish massage? The concert's only going to last another 45 minutes."

"Uh...Swedish."

"Great," said Jason. "We'll pipe in Norah Jones! Why don't you go into Room 29—Inga is available. She'll be happy to loosen up those back muscles for you."

I went into Room 29 and, sure enough, Inga was waiting. She asked me to take off my shirt and lie down on the massage table. Then she got to work. "You are so tense!" Inga said, as she kneaded my neck. "Ahhhhhh, that feels great," I told her.

Later, I soaked in the jacuzzi for a while. Then I loaded up on desserts—lemon pie, cookies, a scoop of vanilla ice cream, and a big piece of chocolate cake.

After the concert, I met my daughter and her friends on Market Street in front of the Warfield. Seeing my contented face, she asked suspiciously, "What did you think?"

"Well, the pâté was exquisite," I said as I started to walk toward the Muni stop. "Oh, and the massage and hot tub? Perfect."

She looked at me like I was an alien from another planet. I get that look a lot.

As I continued strolling down the street, I heard her shout, "What? You're making that up! Are you making that up? Wait!..."



Owen Baker-Flynn is a Noe Valley parent, street performer, and voiceover artist. You can reach him at owen@ob-f.com.